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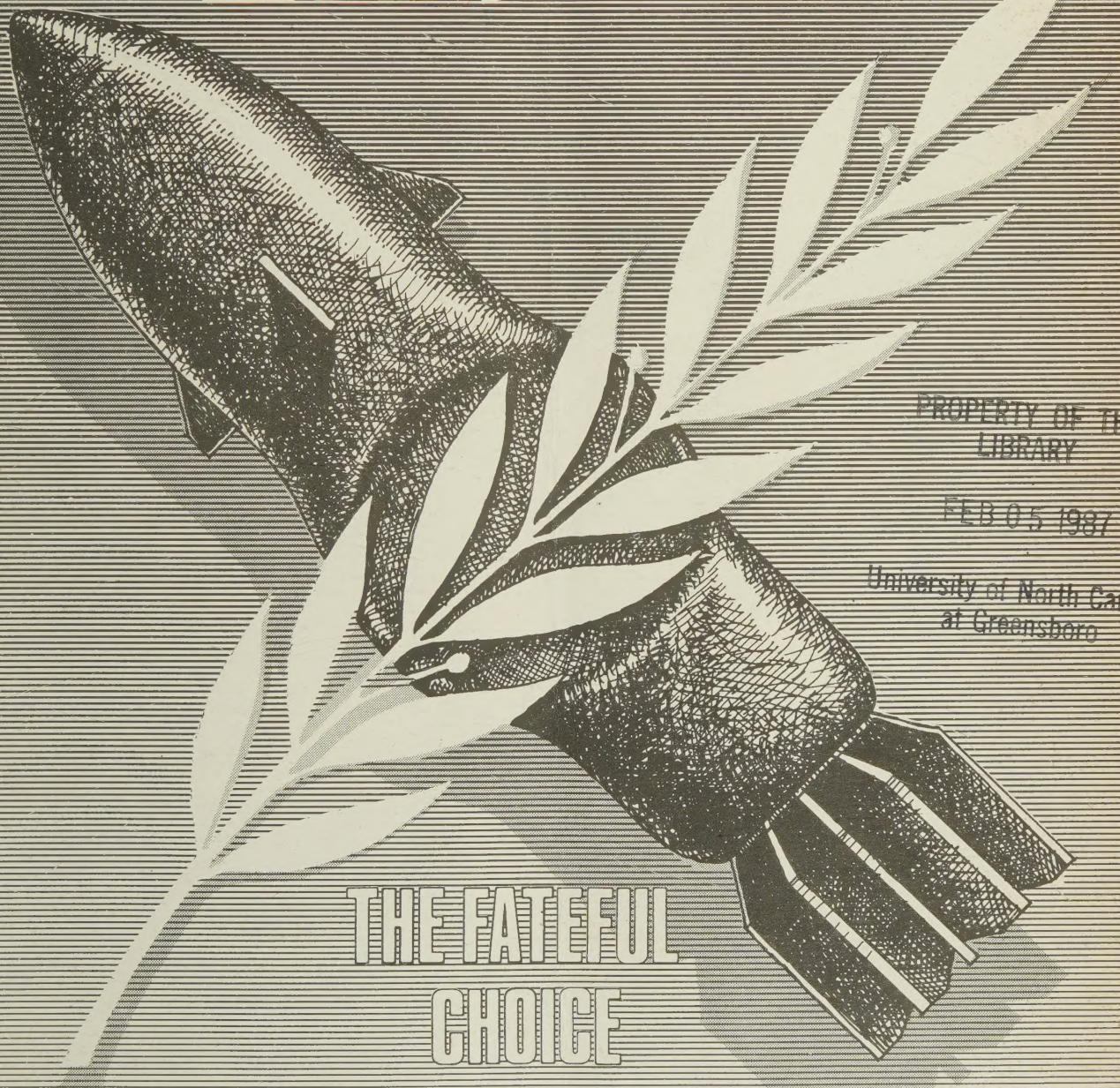
NEW TIMES



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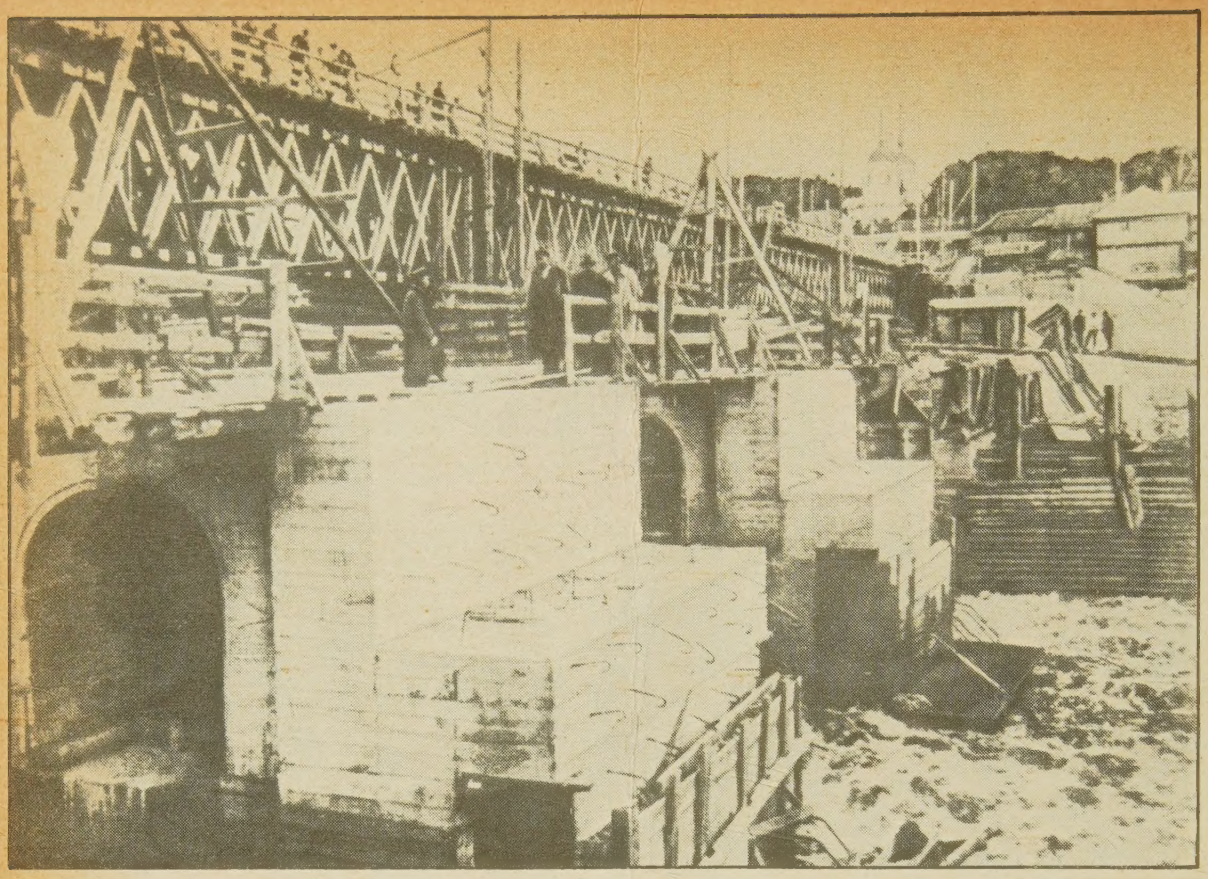
THE FATEFUL CHOICE

CHINA, 1947. AMERICAN OCCUPATION?

THE "EUROPEAN BOMB" TRICK



Construction of the Volkhov hydroelectric power station had been stopped before the revolution by the owners of steam power stations.

1917–1987

On March 14, 1918, Professor Lomonosov whom the Soviet government had asked to ascertain whether deliveries of American railway rolling stock would be continued, cabled Moscow that the 750 locomotives and 16,000 railway cars manufactured earlier at U.S. plants would not be sent to Soviet Russia for political reasons.

In other words, sanctions were being imposed.

It was at that time that Lenin was working on a plan that was to lay the foundations of the socialist economy. This had now become possible, for the state was going over from workers' control to workers' management of production. The productive forces were being restored even though socialist management of the economy had to be built in a situation when state capitalism and private enterprise still existed.

We knew that the economic competition with capitalism could be won only through more efficient organization of labour and higher productivity. But for this fuel, power and metal were needed, and these branches were virtually nonexistent in tsarist Russia. They had to be built up. But how was this to be done at a time when the whole economy was in a state of dislocation, when factories stood idle for lack of fuel and power, and the railways did not function, when ploughland was neglected and unemployment was mounting?

The workers of the Bryansk Locomotive Works, followed by the workers of Petrograd, adopted their own labour code: "We stand for creative, constructive labour. Any worker who stops his machine even five minutes before the end of the working day will be prosecuted and discharged on the spot."

With the strictest economy and nationwide revolutionary discipline as the rule, the Bolsheviks proceeded to plan production, studying the potentialities of a dozen of the biggest factories and organizing the distribution of fuel and raw materials among them. Work on the construction of the Volkhov hydroelectric power station was resumed in order to provide Petrograd industry with cheap power. In unheated cities engineers planned the electrification of the central European Russia and the Donbas, drew up projects for hydropower stations on the Volga. The best scientific and technical forces of Russia were enlisted in this grand undertaking; the restructuring of the economy gave impetus to the enterprise and initiative of the workers and the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses. For exhausted, enfeebled Russia of the time the plans adopted by the Party in the spring of 1918 seemed as fantastic as a journey to new galaxies would be today. But the republic proceeded boldly to carry out these plans.

The peasants joined forces against the grain speculators in the countryside and sold grain to the state at fixed prices.

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

4 February 2, 1987 Founded 1943

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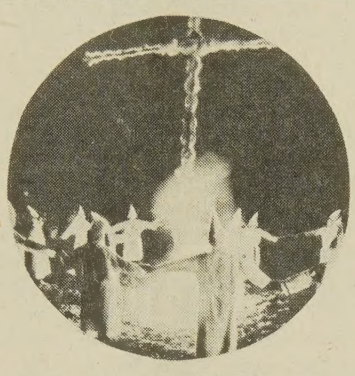

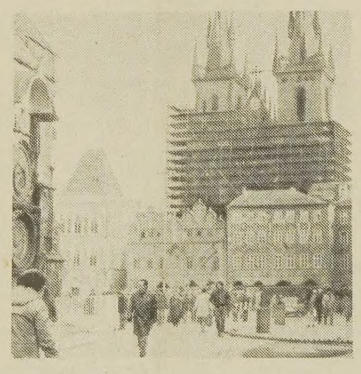

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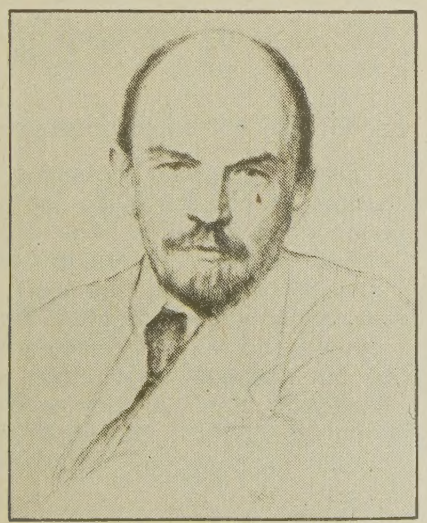

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WE AND LENIN
Every generation has its own road to Lenin. What we look for in Lenin is indicative of many things....

Reflections on Lenin's ideological and spiritual legacy by YEGOR YAKOVLEV.

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FROM OUR MAILBAG

It is evident that Mr Gorbachev sees the necessity of international cooperation to ensure the future of the planet. People the world over will never forget how fervently he called on the U.S. to ban the development of SDI. There is no denying the fact that Mr Gorbachev's proposals to stop "star wars" will go a long way towards saving this generation from destruction in a global thermonuclear holocaust.

Isao ASHIBA
Tokyo, Japan

I find it atrocious that the Western media apply different yardsticks to developments in the U.S.S.R. and the Western countries. The Chernobyl tragedy was used for propaganda purposes, and its scale and consequences were grossly exaggerated. On the other hand, after the Rhine had all but perished (the same fate awaits the river Po, incidentally), the press soft-pedalled the implications of this. Within days of the tragedy it was trying to convince readers that everything was back to normal.

Maria PERELLI
Milan, Italy

Propaganda from the U.S.A. constantly tells the world of the great freedoms enjoyed by the citizens of that country. One of these freedoms which has always concerned me greatly is the "freedom" of all citizens to own firearms. Recently our local paper had a small item about a Harrisburg bank (U.S.A.) offering its customers handguns instead of interest.

For a country already known as the most violent on earth they appear to do little in a practical way to halt violence.

Stephanie JACKSON
Gin Gin, Australia

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

TRUE TO THE LENIN TRADITION

Lenin is more alive than anyone living, the poet said, and there is a great deal of truth in this. After six-odd decades of the mournful day in January 1924 the need to ask Lenin what we should do next, to match our actions and plans against his norms and his legacy has become only more acute. The reasons for this are discussed elsewhere in this issue. On this page we shall touch upon a different theme.

Lenin did more for the working people than anyone had done before him. It was from Lenin that the working people inherited the Soviet land and the science of building socialism. Unfortunately, we have not always been unwaveringly faithful to all Lenin's behests and for this we have paid dearly. What we have never reneged on, however, was Lenin's call to make an all-out effort to bring mankind deliverance from wars and their causes.

"An end to wars, peace among the nations, the cessation of pillaging and violence" was Lenin's ideal of socialism. Bringing our civilization closer to this ideal has been and remains the main objective of Soviet foreign policy. Its supreme goal is to exclude war from the life of the world community. Peaceful coexistence, détente, disarmament are its foremost priorities.

The path to a world without arms or wars is a thorny and tortuous one. Socialism has shouldered a heavy burden. But its advance is irreversible.

Lenin's idea of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems became a cornerstone of the foreign policy doctrine of the young Soviet Russia. This seemed a utopia to many. It was decades before the idea of peaceful coexistence finally won universal recognition as a fundamental principle of international relations.

There is no denying the importance of this achievement, but time has not stood still. This nuclear-missile age of ours has posed specific problems which call for non-stereotyped and innovatory approaches.

Long before our time Lenin's comprehensive mind registered an alarming phenomenon. Under imperialism, Lenin pointed out, "the whole of social life is now being militarized." Today the accelerated militarization of the U.S. and the entire NATO bloc has led to the insane nuclear arms race, which is pushing mankind ever closer to the brink of fatality.

The only way to avoid going over this brink is to relieve the world of the nuclear burden. If there are no nuclear weapons, there will be no nuclear war.

Proceeding from its programme to safeguard universal peace through nuclear disarmament, advanced on January 15, 1986, the Soviet Union is proposing bold and realistic measures to block the arms race in all its directions. These sweeping proposals, Mikhail Gorbachev pointed out in his message to the leaders of the Delhi Six, constitute firm building material from which a strong edifice of reliable security for all could be erected within the next decade.

Time is pressing. Dynamism and a sense of responsibility are political imperatives in the nuclear and space age. Faithful to Lenin's behests, the Soviet Union is building up its peace potential. Socialism will not take No for an answer to the question of whether mankind is or is not to survive. Social progress and the development of civilization must and will continue.

IS A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD POSSIBLE?

AND WHAT IN YOUR OPINION ARE THE PREREQUISITES FOR INTERNATIONAL STABILITY?

Kenneth Kaunda:

NEW LIGHT IN THIS TROUBLED WORLD

Kenneth Kaunda is the President of Zambia.

This is a very important question, the question that should, if it does not already, exercise the minds of all leaders—in the East and the West, in the North and the South. We live in one world, and the maintenance of peace is of paramount importance. You cannot have peace with nuclear weapons hanging over your head. I believe that this world can do without nuclear weapons. It was like this before nuclear weapons were invented.

In this respect, on behalf of the people of Zambia, their party and government, I would like to take this opportunity to pay genuine and sincere tribute to comrade Gorbachev. I think that all of us in the world should be thanking him for working for peace, for preaching peace. He has taken so many steps in this direction. He really has brought new light to this troubled world. I say this not because I am speaking to a Soviet journalist. I am speaking from the bottom of my heart.

My humble request to all leaders in the Western camp is: please, give Gorbachev a chance, take him and try him for what he says, and not what took place in the past. If the West neglects that man's offers, his genuine gestures of peace, it will lose something it may regret very well.

In short, I will say that comrade Gorbachev's proposals that this world dispose of all nuclear weapons by the year 2000 is a distinct possibility. This can be achieved with the determination of the leaders of those countries which have nuclear weapons. ■

Evgeny Evtushenko:

ALL THAT IS ESSENTIAL IS POSSIBLE

Evgeny Evtushenko is a well-known Soviet poet.

A world without nuclear weapons is essential and therefore possible. Everything that is essential is possible.

International stability rests on the stability of conscience. Yet there is nothing more stable than that unremittingly devalued concept.

To betray one's country is unscrupulous. However, there are those who identify government with country. For most people in Germany under Hitler's rule his orders were the country's orders. But, as history has shown, Hitler was a traitor to Germany for he proceeded from its imagined, not its real, interests. Loyalty to the country and keeping a clear conscience consisted in defying Hitler's orders. Betrayal became patriotism, while patriotism meant betrayal.

Deserters from American troops in Vietnam were not traitors to the United States. Many acted out of conscience, not cowardice. The American girl student who stuck a flower in the barrel of a tommy gun was a patriot, and the National Guardsman who killed her was an anti-patriot. Many such instances could be cited.

Patriotism that is counter to conscience is anti-patriotism. However, conscience differs with different people. A conscience may be tiny and narrow and imperceptibly become lack of conscience by virtue of its limited nature, its complacency. When the evolution of conscience lags behind the evolution of technology, that is frightening. We have achieved some things in the course of that evolution. Everyone, doubtless, sees serfdom and slavery as unscrupulous. However, any number of modifications of serfdom and slavery are disguised as freedom.

Conscience rebels against war. A dirty war kills conscience. How many times in history have we seen both sides ingeniously argue that they were drawn into the war by the other side against their will and that they have a clear conscience while the adversary is devoid of conscience.

In this nuclear age we can have no hidebound national conscience. Conscience is national only when it is international. Only the evolution of international conscience can guarantee peace to all nations, to all together and to each independently.

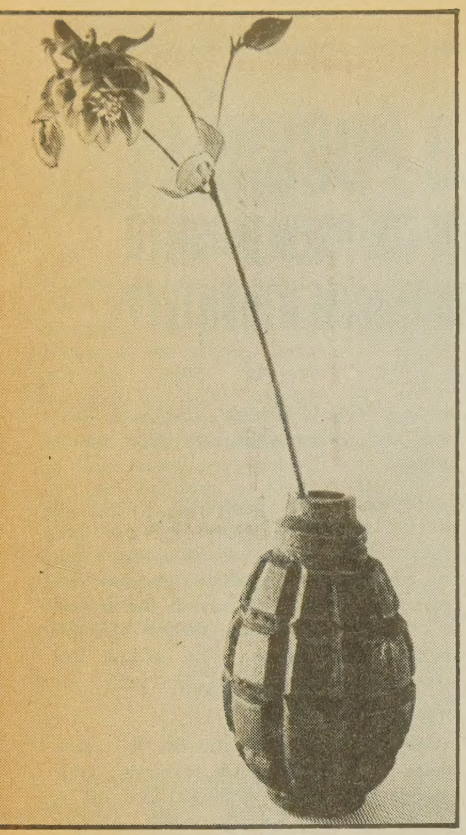
■

Timothy Renton:

WE HAVE OTHER PRIORITIES

Timothy Renton is British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

I myself am of the opinion that the best we should do at the moment, and the most useful and the most practical, is to concentrate particularly on the three priorities on which President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher agreed at



Poster by Wilson Weber (Brazil) from the international contest "For Peace and Social Progress."

Camp David in November last year, and which have now been endorsed by all our allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. That is to say, the 50 per cent reduction in strategic offensive weapons, an agreement on long-range intermediate nuclear weapons, which we would like to see abolished altogether, and a worldwide ban on chemical weapons.

You might say perhaps it's appropriate to say in Moscow that this is our five-year plan. Chemical weapons ban we could reach quicker than that, I hope. Equally, the treaty banning long-range intermediate nuclear weapons. To work out the details of the elimination of 50 per cent of strategic offensive weapons is likely to take a bit longer—hence the terminology of five-year plan. But if we could agree on the three practical points, that in itself would make this by far the largest programme for the reduction of nuclear arms that the world has ever seen. And I think it is better to concentrate on these practical realizable objectives rather than at this stage look further ahead at a more utopian situation of total elimination of nuclear weapons, which, in my judgement, isn't in the offing in the near future.

■

Hans Blix:
USEFUL EXPERIENCE OF IAEA

Dr Blix is director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

I take an optimistic view of the possibility of disarmament and try as best I can to promote it, although I cannot so far boast of any tangible results. Nonetheless, I believe a world without nuclear weapons is possible. Nuclear disarmament talks are being held in Geneva, but we too, within the framework of IAEA, are doing work that is of no mean significance for these talks. By this I mean IAEA safeguards. Allow me to explain. We practise a system of control and supervision, incorporated in which are both signatories to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and other states concerned which notify IAEA of the location of fissionable materials, in particular plutonium and uranium. We also send inspectors to these countries to supervise the declared location of fissionable materials. Hence we see to it that these materials are not used for military purposes in countries signatory to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and the Tlatelolco treaty, as well as in states that have placed their nuclear installations under IAEA control.

Control is an essential part of the agenda at all disarmament talks. Consequently, I think our related experience is important for nuclear disarmament talks.

One more new aspect. Today out of their own good will four of the five states in possession of nuclear weapons invite our inspectors to supervise how some of their peaceful installations are used. One is the Soviet Union, which subscribed to this system several years ago. We are allowed to inspect a whole range of installations in the Soviet Union at our own choice. We are currently negotiating with China on the possibility of inspecting some of its peaceful nuclear installations. I hope we shall reach agreement with that country this year.

I presume that in future discussions of nuclear disarmament the experience we have gained in inspecting peaceful nuclear installations in states in possession of nuclear weapons will be of value.

■

Ivo Spaggiari:
I BELIEVE IN IT

Ivo Spaggiari, known by the pseudonym Pantaleone, is an Italian artist, winner of numerous international competitions, and a member of the Italian Communist Party.

Yes, a world without nuclear weapons is possible. I believe in it. Without this belief one could not live, breathe, and feel. Yes, international stability is possible without nuclear weapons.

As a veteran Communist and anti-fascist Resistance fighter I can identify with the indefatigable struggle being waged by the Soviet Union and its present dynamic leadership to consolidate peace and mutual understanding between nations. Nuclear weapons can be eliminated from the face of the earth if the West is imbued with the understanding of the timeliness and vital importance of the comprehensive Peace Programme, formulated in such concrete detail in the package of Soviet peace proposals put forward in Reykjavik. I have the impression that today many more Italians than yesterday or the day before realize who is who in the exceedingly complex dialogue between the great powers. On one side, we see an unremitting quest for new solutions in accordance with the demands of the nuclear era, an impressively open readiness to consider and discuss any counterproposals. On the other side, we see violations of the SALT-2 treaty, the refusal to join the Soviet moratorium on nuclear testing, and a buildup of qualitatively new strategic weapons.

I find the work of science fiction artists appealing. They could paint many canvasses on the theme of "star wars." The subject would make impressive paintings, but in real life it spells an end to everything: to all of human civilization and to the last flower on our planet.

Poll conducted by A. ARKHIPOV, E. BABENKO, V. OVSYANNIKOV, N. RESHETNYAK

ASIAN-PACIFIC REGION

Who Will Follow Suit?

● IN MOSCOW, A JOINT AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC TO WITHDRAW SOME OF THE SOVIET TROOPS PROVISIONALLY STATIONED IN MONGOLIAN TERRITORY. THE MOVE IMPLEMENTS ONE MORE PROVISION ENUNCIATED IN MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S VLADIVOSTOK SPEECH.

"We're working for peace at full blast, at the risk of our lives, while all the Russians do is insist on their dreadful moratorium."

Cartoon by V. Arsenyev

The U.S.S.R. Defence Ministry's announcement has had widespread repercussions throughout the region. It was reported in all Japanese newspapers. "The Soviet decision is of great political significance," the Tokyo Shimbun stressed. Having offered a realistic concept of peace and stability in the Asian-Pacific region, the Soviet Union is not confining itself to mere declarations, but is doing everything in its power to bring it about.

The pullout of some of the Soviet troops from Mongolia demonstrates Moscow's firm conviction that regional détente is possible. Such measures as arms restrictions in the region and the removal, in the field of military activity, of every pretext for suspicion will undoubtedly serve to establish an atmosphere of confidence and understanding between states.

"We are closely following developments in Asia and the Pacific," General Choindon Purevdorj, chief of the Institute of Military Studies at Mongolia's Ministry of Defence, told me in Ulan Bator. "Two tendencies are in confrontation here. There is, on the one hand, the desire of a large number of states to stabilize the situation and, on the other, attempts by several other countries to prevent the consolidation of the forces of peace and at the least preserve existing hotbeds of tension, if not assume complete control over the entire region. We have not overlooked the process of expansion of the U.S. military presence in the region. We are also worried by Tokyo extending the range of operation of its Self-Defence Forces, and its refusal to limit its military budget. Still, we support the Soviet leadership's decision. The pullout of some of the Soviet troops—though in ordinary human terms we shall regret parting with our comrades-in-arms—must serve as an example and help other countries in their quest for ways and means of attaining security and lasting peace in the region."

The Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Asia are not alone in their desire to secure stability in the region. The anti-nuclear policy of the South Pacific states, especially New Zealand, is seriously influencing the situation there. Evidently that is why the U.S. is bringing all its weight to bear to obstruct their joint action and create antagonisms. This year this mission was assumed by Japan, whose Foreign Minister Tadashi Kuranari toured Pacific countries to "drive a wedge," as the Tokyo Shimbun put it, between the Soviet Union and these states. The Kuranari tour was programmed at Japanese-U.S. military consultations held in advance. Meeting in Honolulu, the representatives of the

Pentagon and Japan's Defence Agency resolved to seek "extensive coordination" in military strategy, not only for concerted action in the event of war, but also for the establishment of control today over the entire Pacific.

While on tour, Kuranari repeatedly mentioned "the dangers emanating from growing Soviet influence in the region." In Canberra, he proposed to the Australian ministers that the two countries cooperate to counteract "Soviet infiltration" (this particular pronouncement of Kuranari's did not meet with understanding). In Wellington, Kuranari said nothing about New Zealand's anti-nuclear policy, sidestepping the issue inasmuch as Tokyo is profoundly disturbed, as the newspaper Sankei put it, by the fact that New Zealand's policy is stimulating anti-war moods in the region and is detrimental to the U.S. policy.

Such is the present-day foreign policy of Japan, a country whose history, forever associated with Hiroshima and Nagasaki, would warrant the expectation of involvement in the effort to secure a nuclear-free world and reduce tensions in the region.

The Soviet Union has demonstrated that its proposed programme of security for Asia can be implemented. The U.S.S.R., Mongolia and other socialist states in Asia are proving this by their actions. Who will follow suit?

Leonid MLECHIN

AFGHANISTAN

First Days of the Cease-fire

● WHO IS FOR AND WHO IS AGAINST THE POLICY OF RECONCILIATION?

In Pushtu and Dari the word "solh" means "peace." Today it is heard on the lips of all Afghan patriots who dream of seeing peace at last in Afghanistan. The revolutionary government has announced a programme of reconciliation, which was supported by the delegates to the Second Congress of the National Fatherland Front (NFF), the largest political organization in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

The NFF is called upon to play a crucial role in the implementation of the policy of national reconciliation. This will be done by recruiting patriotic mullahs, ulemas, magistrates, doctors, teachers, tribal chieftains, and other individuals held in popular esteem to the guiding bodies of the NFF. It has been proposed that Islamic parties prepared to seek reconciliation with the people's government join the NFF, in which case they may retain their organizational structure and engage in political activity.

The NFF, which the congress renamed the National Front (NF), is open to all, as much to those whom the enemy has deceived as to those who, while disagreeing with the goals of the revolution, nevertheless consider themselves patriotic Afghans, as well as to organizations and groups that do not recognize the platform of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

The NF held its Second Congress on the first day of the six-month cease-fire, which began on January 15. Scores of thousands of inhabitants of provincial and district centres and hundreds of villages celebrated it as a popular holiday. Already in these earliest days several military formations, in addition to those with whom negotiations had already been conducted, have responded to the call for a cease-fire from the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the Revolutionary Council and the republic's government. Thus, 3,500 members of military formations in Herat Province and 500 members of military formations in Fariab Province have gone over to the side of the revolutionary authority. However, cases in which the enemy opened fire have also been recorded.

At a conference in Peshawar, the leaders of the opposition parties based in Pakistan rejected the peace offers. Washington has bluntly voiced dissatisfaction with the policy of national reconciliation. A White House spokesman called the cease-fire that has now entered into force "empty talk." The U.S. is trying to present matters as if a political settlement in Afghanistan depended exclusively on a Soviet troop pullout. Meanwhile the U.S. media report more U.S. "aid" this year for the maintenance of counterrevolutionary military formations.

The people's government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan appreciates that reconciliation is not to be achieved overnight. It is a process that calls for time, patience, compromise and concession. At his news conference in Kabul Najib, General Secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, said: "The policy of national reconciliation will be continued, come what may, even should our adversaries not join the unilateral cease-fire. If the opposing side replies to our cease-fire by fighting we shall have to respond with the full strength of our armed forces. War is the alternative to reconciliation. However, should that happen it will not be any choice of ours."

Leonid MIRONOV

CHAD

No More "Red Line"

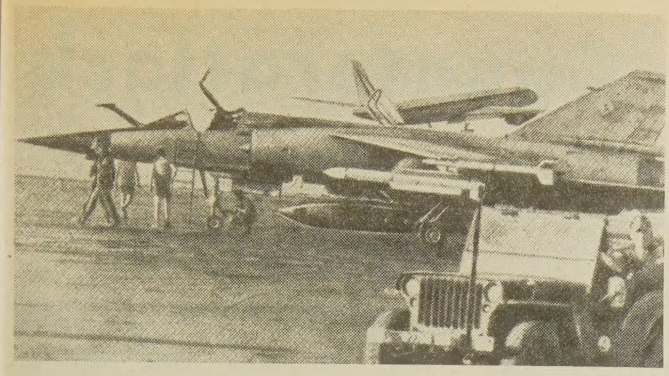
● "UNCONTESTABLY A NEW SITUATION" HAS EMERGED IN CHAD, SAID GENERAL JEAN SAULNIER, FRENCH ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF, IN N'DJAMENA. TO BOLSTER HIS CLAIM, HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE STRATEGIC "RED LINE" WAS NO LONGER "FROZEN."

The "red line" was drawn by the French command along the 16th parallel in 1983 to divide Chad into two parts. The French troops stayed and are still staying in the southern part. At the time when it was drawn, France declared to the world that her troops would never cross the "red line." Now the French Armed Forces Chief of Staff has made it clear that the "red line" is no longer an obstacle to French action in the northern part of the country. Here are some of the facts that bear out his words.

On December 16 (Saulnier takes this to be the start of the "new situation") French transport planes dropped arms for the supporters of the N'Djamena administration on the Tibesti plateau in northern Chad. Shortly afterwards the French command allowed about a thousand N'Djamena troops in army vehicles to cross the "red line" into the Tibesti area to join the hostilities there. In this way France broke another of its promises, namely, to prevent armed clashes between opposing forces in Chad to enable them to look for a peaceful solution to the conflict which is rending the country apart.

N'Djamena soldiers who arrived in the Tibesti area were accompanied by French "observers," the Paris Le Monde reported. The "observers," who acted as military reconnaissance, have remained in Tibesti. The paper has not disclosed their numbers. Nor has it answered the question: are the "observers" commanding N'Djamena troops in their operations?

Some intriguing facts have been reported by Le Figaro. It appears that on December 16 the transport planes drop-



This Mirage is one of the dozens of war planes France has rushed to Chad.

Photo from Jeune Afrique (Paris)

ped not only military supplies, but a group of French paratroopers. The paper reports that they are instructors and their task is to take the N'Djamena supporters through a crash course in handling French weapons, and interacting with N'Djamena regular troops. The same paper has reported that the French have set up a training camp for N'Djamena supporters north of the "red line." In the middle of January, 14 French Jaguar and Mirage bombers attacked the airfield at Ouadi-Doum in northern Chad. Those involved in the raid boasted that they had knocked out the airfield's radar system.

All this, however, is only the beginning of French military involvement in northern Chad. Speaking to journalists in N'Djamena, Jean Saulnier declared: "We will not say we won't take action again in the north if that seems useful." And he added: "One should not limit one's range of action."

In connection with this statement, Le Figaro reports, observers in N'Djamena are "intrigued" by the arrival of several top paratroop officers. The question being asked here is: will the French troops be given a new task involving offensive as well as defensive action? The question is particularly relevant now that the "red line" has been officially proclaimed "unfrozen," that is a mere fiction.

Leonid SKURATOV

F.R.G.

Abettors of That Sale

● IN BONN, A SPECIAL PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION, SET UP ON THE INITIATIVE OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES, HAS BEGUN AN INQUIRY INTO ILLEGAL SUPPLIES OF BLUEPRINTS FOR THE LATEST TYPE OF SUBMARINE TO SOUTH AFRICA.

The affair involves high-ranking government officials, ministers, and Chancellor Kohl himself (see New Times No. 51, 1986). The first witnesses were to testify before the commission at the end of December. However, CDU, CSU and FDP deputies succeeded in having the commission meeting postponed till mid-January, citing Christmas recess as an excuse. This was no more than a pretext. The ruling parties feared that new revelations about the disgraceful deal with the racists could affect the outcome of the Bundestag elections on January 25.

Facts unfavourable to the ruling coalition were revealed at the very first session. It transpired that the Kiel-based shipbuilding firm Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft (HDW) and the engineering office Lübeck (IKL), which works closely with it, have sold blueprints of a submarine to South Africa with direct government connivance.

Testifying before the commission, Waldemar Schreckenberger, who headed the Federal Chancellor's office from 1982 to 1984, admitted that Kohl had asked him to give "sympathetic consideration" to South Africa's request. No wonder the heads of the IKL, knowing that the chancellor and CSU leader Strauss would like to see the deal go through (they had learned of it from Schreckenberger himself), hastened to conclude an agreement with the racists to provide the blueprints. The last batch of blueprints was handed over to the South African embassy in Bonn by IKL representatives on June 19, 1985, the day after they met Economics Minister Martin Bangemann, who had supposedly notified the businessmen from Kiel and Lübeck of the government's "final" decision not to give clearance for the deal.

The arms merchants chose to interpret the minister's words to mean that absence of clearance does not amount to a ban. In the early 1970s they had sold blueprints for a submarine to Israel without the government's permission, but with its tacit agreement.

Meanwhile, it has come to light that military electronic equipment has been sold to Pretoria along with the blueprints. Der Spiegel reported that as early as 1981 the Economics Ministry, under its then head Otto Graf Lambsdorff (FDP), granted permission to the Freiburg firm LITEF to sell navigation systems for warships, including submarines, to South Africa. In 1985 and 1986 LITEF provided the racists with several electronic instruments. It is unlikely that the Economics Ministry was unaware of how these instruments would be used.

The CDU and CSU members of the parliamentary commission have no desire to go into all these questions. The day after Schreckenberger's testimony, their leader Friedrich Bohl proposed to dissolve the commission, as it had, in his opinion, fulfilled its brief. If the government had not given official permission for the sale of submarine blueprints there was nothing to inquire into. As regards the actions of HDW's and IKL's directors, Bohl is in agreement with the head of the main financial directorate of Kiel, which has described the illegal sale of technical documentation to racists as a "minor offense." The directorate proposed to impose a 50,000 mark fine on each firm, a ridiculously small sum in view of the profits derived. The Social Democrat leader in the commission Norbert Gansel remarked that to accept the proposal would be tantamount to approval of illegal arms deals. Uschi Eid, representing the Green Party, asked if CDU/CSU politicians had not been bribed by the Kiel and Lübeck firms.

The question is not without foundation. The blueprints are known to have been sold for 46 million marks of which only 42.6 million were registered in the merchants' accounts, with 3.4 million remaining unaccounted for. The sum has probably been paid as a "commission" fee to those who helped push the deal through. The press mentions Siegfried Zoglmann, former CSU deputy in the Bundestag and personal friend of Strauss. He is now actively lobbying on behalf of the military establishment. It is hard to imagine, however, that Zoglmann managed to pocket all the money himself rather than share it with other go-betweens.

Alexander TOLPEGIN
our own correspondent

Bonn

The Right on the Counterattack

NIKITA YERMAKOV

The lights went off in the house. We had to delay supper, for the stove cooled fast, and I had to put aside the electric typewriter. The power had been switched off for 30 minutes because of another strike.

Today no politician, commentator or newspaper would undertake to predict what course events will take in France, even in the immediate future. And will these lines still be topical when they reach you?

Will the ruling majority stem the tide of the strikers' struggle and emulate Reagan's "feat" in vanquishing the air traffic controllers' strike or Thatcher's victory over the striking miners? Or will it beat a retreat and resort again to political leap-frog with resignations and elections? In the French media today there is no dearth of guesswork.

Whatever the outcome of the present crisis, it has laid bare the social problems besetting France today. How did things come to the present juncture? What factors—objective and subjective—have led to the present dramatic developments?

The Push by Big Capital

When last spring the right returned to power after a five-year interval, they, to all intents and purposes, pursued the course set by their predecessors, for the country's economy was in a satisfactory state, in the view of the ruling classes.

Unemployment figures were still being doctored in various ways. For example, young people were offered temporary, unskilled low-paid jobs. As in other Western countries, financial policies were focussed on combating inflation and reducing state expenditure, primarily at the expense of social security.

French enterprises were made more competitive, in the first place by lowering wages, cutting the number of jobs and raising labour productivity through modernization in industry.

Even under the Socialist majority, price control had been relaxed and tax privileges granted to industrialists. Flexible working hours were introduced, which gave a free hand to employers in relations with their employees.

The working time regulation bill was the last piece of legislation the Socialists hastily pushed through the National Assembly. A special session was convened for the purpose on the eve of the elections, and confidence in the government put to the vote. Business circles in France greeted this with a considerable livening up on the stock exchange.

The Socialists managed to manoeuvre between the interests of various strata without creating the impression that some of them were being given privileges at the expense of others. Class peace—and quite a long one at that—was maintained in the best traditions of Social Democracy. On returning to power, the right broke that fragile balance and drew criticism from the Socialist opposition by speeding up some of the reforms being demanded by big business.

Several factors account for such policies: revenge for the setback at the polls in 1981, adherence to the dogmas of Reaganomics now in vogue with the right, the present ruling majority's closer links with big capital, and the desire to show their supporters that they have rejected the Socialists' course. To this should be added the disadvantageous political timetable, with presidential elections due in the spring of 1988, which is impelling the government to act quickly.

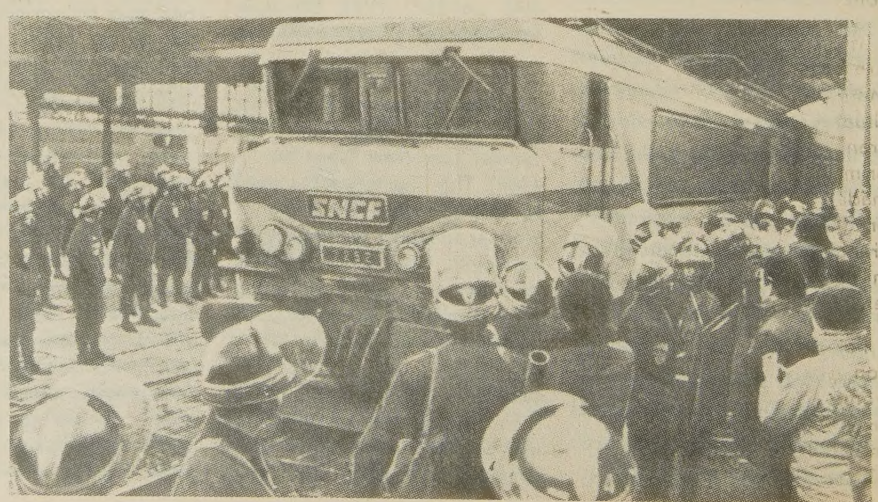
Such are the factors that have predetermined the course taken by the Chirac cabinet. However, even the most deft propaganda has failed to camouflage the truth that some strata have obtained new benefits, while others have had to shoulder the burden of the crisis to a still greater extent.

Gainers and Losers

Even an incomplete list of what capitalists have gained in recent months is impressive. Full abrogation of taxes on large fortunes. Lowering of income tax and the tax on corporate profits. An amnesty for those who had illegally exported capital. Anonymity restored in all gold transactions, virtually no price control. Lower taxes for those

These helmeted men are not here to escort a distinguished visitor. They are "seeing in" striking railway workers.

Photo from L'Humanité (France)



who buy real estate to let. Abrogation of administrative control over dismissals—a safeguard, albeit insignificant, against high-handedness by employers.

The government has made another generous gift to employers, in giving them still greater freedom to determine the working hours and wages of their employees. Entrepreneurs hiring people under 25 are exempt from payments to various social security funds obligatory in other cases.

Neither have other sections of the traditional supporters of the right been left without their slice of the cake. Of the two billion francs allocated as state aid to farmers the lion's share will go to large farms. Physicians in private practice will charge higher fees.

At the same time, measures adopted ostensibly to "combat the crisis" and "display national solidarity" have hit the working classes hard. Social spending in the 1987 budget has been slashed and guaranteed minimum wages and earnings in the public sector frozen. The private sector is permitted to raise them by not more than two per cent, which will not keep pace with the index. A rise in pensions has been cancelled, but deductions for the pension fund will be greater.

Partial or full compensation for grave illnesses will be paid in fewer cases. Even such an apparently universally beneficial measure as the lowering of income tax has turned out to be of advantage only to the propertied classes as the contributions workers have to make to social security funds have simultaneously been raised by an amount corresponding exactly to the fall in income tax.

The class bias of the above-mentioned measures leaps to the eye.

Has the government succeeded in enlivening the economy and ensuring its recovery through robbing the poor and giving to the rich? Its ten-odd months in power are too short a period for objective assessments. Nonetheless some conclusions suggest themselves.

It should be borne in mind that the present cabinet moved into the Matignon Palace when the economic situation was extremely auspicious for France. Prices of raw materials, primarily oil, had plummeted, and this made it possible to halve expenditure on fuel and save 80 billion francs. France also stood to gain from the drop in the rate of exchange for the dollar.

For all that, there were still 2.5 million unemployed French men and women last year. The economy was growing, though at an insignificant rate, and the inflation rate had settled at 2.3 per cent. Between January and November last year, the trade deficit was reduced to 2.6 billion francs, due in large measure to the devaluation of the franc carried out last spring in the context of the European currency system, and the balance of payments showed profit, of 20 billion francs, for the first time since 1979.

Rosy as these figures might seem, they do not reflect the true state of affairs. Without taking the energy bill into account, prices last year grew by 4 per cent on average. For manufactured products and private sector services, the figure was 4.7 per cent.

France gained 80 billion francs on lower oil prices, and lost 50 billion on sales of finished products—an obvious indication that French industry is not competitive enough.

Allegations that high wages result in higher export prices hold no water. In the steel industry, for instance, wages constitute 30 per cent of the cost of the end product, in the automobile industry, 20 per cent, and in the production of electronic hardware, a mere 10 per cent. And it should be stressed that the figure tends to decrease. Outlays on wages per unit of output in France are lower than in the F.R.G., where a 2.3 per cent growth was registered last year, with West German goods becoming more competitive.

On the whole, industrialists and financiers were satisfied. In 1986 their profits reached an all-time high, though it is true no new investments were made in industry or jobs created. And the trend is likely to persist in 1987.

The Masses on the Offensive

Such was the socio-economic background for the powerful class explosion that began late last year and has continued into this. Seamen and railwaymen, state employees and power workers, Paris transport workers and miners firmly drew the employers' and government's attention to their plight.

The pitch of working-class action after the students' victory, which compelled the government to cancel the proposed university reform, alarmed the ruling circles. Though the surging discontent of the masses was obvious, their outburst caught the government unawares.

After a short period of confusion, the right launched a counteroffensive and used every means at its disposal to break the strikers.

Minor concessions and a determination not to give an inch in matters of principle, a freeze on wages, attempts to split the strikers' united front by making advances to unions prone to compromise, counting on the difficult financial position of participants in the most protracted strikes, rabid anti-worker propaganda, brandishing the "communist threat," and mobilizing right-wing activists with support from shopkeepers and small business. Such were the weapons in the government's arsenal.

The conflict was quickly becoming politicized. Social peace was being blown to smithereens. Class clashes, the business journal L'Expansion wrote, were erupting anywhere, any time. The magazine sounded the alarm on the employers' behalf, urging measures to avert such upheavals. "Conflicts, like tuberculosis," it admonished, "call for preventive treatment."

The stormy events have once again deepened the rifts in the ruling majority. Some of the groupings within it have come to favour dialogue, not confrontation (as, for instance, the Social Democratic Centre of the Union for French Democracy). Though formally still supporting the ruling majority, Raymond Barre, the well-known right-wing leader and a probable presidential nominee, has unequivocally dissociated himself from the government.

The mechanism of cohabitation between the Socialist President and the right-wing cabinet—situation unprecedented in the Fifth Republic—is also stalling.

The Socialists, who have their own modernization programme, have gained an excellent opportunity to criticize the ruling majority.

The Communists have given a principled assessment of the situation. In their day-to-day activities they support the workers' just demands, their struggle to uphold their rights. "Today we are witnessing the class struggle," L'Humanité writes. "Big capital is defending itself against the workers' offensive. It is defending its privileges, its power, its financial strategy, its politics. And it has long been common knowledge that for capital the end justifies the means, however foul."

Paris

Bofors Covers Up the Tracks

Suspicious death of Carl-Friedrich Algernon, chief of the war materials inspectorate (KMI)

During the evening rush hour in an underground station in the centre of Stockholm, a man standing on the edge of the platform suddenly doubled up and fell back onto the tracks. It all happened in a matter of seconds.

The police started an inquiry calling on all eyewitnesses to testify, for it did not rule out the possibility that Algernon had been pushed.

The accident in the underground might have been written off as just another casualty in a big city but for the circumstances surrounding Algernon's personality and job. For several years he had been head of the KMI, the agency that controls the export of Swedish arms. Under local legislation, arms cannot be exported to countries involved in, or on the brink of, military conflict or to countries that violate human rights. In all other cases, the arms manufacturer must apply for clearance from the government, indicating the addressee, and present completed papers at the border indicating who ordered the shipment. It now appears that these rules can easily be circumvented.

An inquiry into illegal supplies of surface-to-air missiles by the major arms concern Bofors to Persian Gulf countries, including Iran, is shortly to close.

Facts about arms trafficking were made public in the summer of 1985, forcing Claes-Ulrik Winberg, the powerful Bofors boss, to resign from his post in the Swedish Employers' Confederation. According to the French magazine L'Express, Teheran had signed a deal with the concern for 400 RBS-70 missiles which it was to receive with the help of a "friendly country." The Bofors case mentions Singapore.

This small state, however, was merely a trans-shipping point from which the weapons went on to the war-torn Persian Gulf region. These facts were recently reported by Henrik Westander, an expert with the local anti-war organization the Swedish Committee for Peace and Arbitration. The committee looked closely into the case of arms supplies. "We are confident of our data and this prompted our decision to report it to the police," said Henrik Westander. The facts, he said, are corroborated by reports received by the committee from several reliable sources in Iran. The secretary of the Danish Seamen's Union confirmed the data in an interview with the Swedish paper Arbetet.

Let it be noted that Sweden has long been among the top ten arms suppliers thanks to the efforts of the concerns Bofors, Nobel Kemi, and FFV. Half the exports go to developing countries. The amorality of the business does not worry the companies as long as money flows into their coffers. The investigators into the Bofors case have to answer one question: did the government and the KMI know about the firm's deals? If they knew and were silent, the Bofors bosses will get off scot-free. If the concern had been deceiving the authorities, then they may find themselves in prison.

The firm claims that the government and the KMI did know. But there is every indication that this is a desperate bluff on the part of Bofors, as no one can confirm the truth of its assertion. Moreover, it is hard to imagine that the late Olof Palme, who had acted as an intermediary in attempts to bring the senseless Iran-Iraq war to an end, had known about the Bofors arms supplies and turned a blind eye. Bengt Rosanios, Algernon's predecessor as head of the KMI, could not shed any light as he had been taken ill and died at the time the deals were being struck.

Algernon's death will make the investigation of the Bofors case much more difficult, the Swedish papers believe. Algernon was about to testify before the commission. Now he will be silent for ever.

Dmitry POGORZHELSKY
our special correspondent

Stockholm

The Swedish concern Bofors—and its deadly products illegally supplied to Iran.

Photo from L'Express (France)

Biggest-Ever Cultural Events

The forthcoming Festival of the U.S.S.R. in India and Festival of India in the U.S.S.R. are discussed here by the chairman of the Soviet Organizing Committee, Minister of Culture VASILY ZAKHAROV.

Soviet-Indian cultural links and contacts have always been extremely varied and extensive.

The Soviet-Indian cultural exchange programme to be carried out in the form of national festivals (Indian in the U.S.S.R. and Soviet in India) this year and the next will be unprecedented in scale.

The idea of conducting these festivals arose during the visit of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to Moscow in May 1985. And during Mikhail Gorbachev's recent visit to India a protocol was signed on the programmes and terms of conducting these cultural events devoted to red-letter dates in our two countries' histories: the 40th anniversary of India's independence and the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution and the foundation of the Soviet state.

The fact that Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi have assumed honorary chairmanship of the national organizing committees for the conduct of the festivals testifies to the magnitude of these Soviet-Indian cultural events and the great importance both sides justly attach to them.

The forthcoming festivals will have in their programmes theatrical productions and concerts by large and small companies, performances by well-known soloists, various exhibitions, film festivals, scientific symposia, gatherings of artists, sports competitions and displays of athletic skill.

These events will be held on a wide scale. Indian guests will visit Moscow, Leningrad, the capitals of the constituent republics, and many other cities.

In turn, the residents of nearly 40 Indian cities will have the chance to enjoy performances by our drama companies and musicians, visit our exhibitions and see our films.

The Indian festival, the earlier of the two, opens in Moscow on July 3, shortly before the 40th anniversary of India's independence.

The Soviet festival will open in India on November 21, 1987, with a colourful parade and a mass sports show. Similar events will be held, in turn, in Bombay, Bangalore and Calcutta.

This ancient copper coin has been selected as the emblem of the Indian festivals abroad. It symbolizes the Buddhist commandment: "Not To Injure Any Living Being."

During the year India will be toured by our foremost ballet, dance and drama theatre companies.

The Soviet festival programme will feature variety and chamber orchestras, vocal and instrumental groups, solo vocalists and circus troupes and folk art groups from all the constituent republics.

A Soviet ice ballet company will take to India a show that is exotic for the inhabitants of a tropical country. Our figure skaters will perform on a special mobile artificial ice rink.

The festival programmes will involve about 3,500 men and women on both sides, 2,300 of them entertainers. Delegations will also include scientists, public figures, film makers, athletes, and representatives of women's and youth organizations.

The exhibitions to be arranged as part of each festival will cover a wide range of themes. In the Soviet Union, India will display works of classical art going back to remote antiquity, modern paintings, pictures from South India, a collection of national musical instruments, works of decorative and applied art, jewellery, folk crafts from various parts of the country, architectural styles and modern textiles.

We shall also offer Indian audiences a large variety of exhibitions. Here is just a sampling of their themes: Lenin, Soviet art, Russian painting of the 19th century, ancient Russian icons; Russian jewellery; West European old masters as represented in our museums.

A large Soviet trade and industrial exhibition will be arranged in Delhi. Other Soviet exhibitions will introduce Indians to the latest in Soviet science and technology as well as to our architecture.

Eighty Soviet feature films, 60 documentaries, popular science films and cartoons—old and new—will be shown in 24 Indian cities. Indian film makers will show as many pictures in about as many Soviet cities.

Prominent scientists, public figures and professionals of both countries will attend a number of joint seminars and symposia on a wide range of subjects. A public conference will be held on the subject, "The Peoples of India and the Soviet Union: Their Interinfluence and Links Through the Centuries to Our Day."

Conferences, seminars and symposia devoted to the Soviet-Indian Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, various aspects of Soviet-Indian cooperation, and the struggle for peace and security (in the Asian-Pacific region, in particular) will be arranged in India. Historians and economists, agricultural experts, medical doctors, poets, filmmakers, stage directors, schoolteachers, librarians, and students of folklore will meet, and encounters and debates between young people will be arranged. Soviet and Indian athletes will compete in friendly contests and demonstrate their prowess in sports shows. Soviet audiences will be introduced to traditional Indian sports.

In short, the forthcoming national festivals will enable our two nations to learn more about each other's life and culture and, consequently, make for still deeper understanding between us. ■

What Is To Be Done?

A present-day discussion

YEGOR YAKOVLEV

How we approach Lenin is indicative of many things, including the epoch we live in. Do we turn to Lenin in order to probe the essence of things, for an objective, impartial answer to what agitates our minds, or simply to pick out some resounding quotations? To learn from Lenin or merely to borrow a phrase in order to teach others? In the 55 volumes of the Collected Works of Lenin one can find quotations for every occasion—particularly if taken out of context, and truncated with ellipses at the beginning and the end, and, if need be, right in the middle. There was a time when reorganization was on the order of the day, and a spate of quotations from Lenin were cited in support of it, but years passed and a quotation about the harmfulness of overindulgence in reorganization was trotted out.

Another method—one particularly familiar to me—was to use Lenin's writings with slightly more finesse, so to say: indirectly, by implication. For example, you wrote an article entitled "The Practical School of Lenin" and you quoted a telegram an angry Lenin sent in April 1918 to the vice-chairman of the Archangel Gubernia executive committee: "...if we conscientiously teach workers and peasants to be disciplined, we must begin with ourselves." What you had in mind was not that particular Archangel officeholder of 1918, but the crude, overbearing executive you had met the previous week in line of your journalistic duty. In the hope that he might read that quotation and stop to think! That he read it is possible, but whether he gave any thought to it is doubtful.

You may have noticed that I have been using the past tense. Why? Because I myself once took the beaten path and found myself in a blind alley. The 27th Congress of the CPSU had been held and, turning as usual to Lenin's works, I was about to indulge in some journalistic reflections. Days passed, with nothing to show for it but a wastepaper basket filled to overflowing. I could not understand what was wrong. I was an old hand at writing—I had been at it for decades. Finally I realized, or rather sensed, what was amiss: the time of reading between the lines was going. Now one had to speak out loud and clear—provided, of course, one had something to say. Each sets his own bounds of the permissible, and those who do hesitate to do so, whisper among themselves, wondering who allowed it. If only one knew exactly who, one would make discreet inquiries and be safely progressive.

That article of mine did not work out. What had been was no more. But were we now to wax eloquent over the fact that things were at last as they should be? Times change, but the mainstream of Russian journalism, the highroad it is following with amazing consistency, remains: from "who is to blame?" to "what is to be done?"

... A group of us met on New Year's eve. No sooner had we met than we started arguing and went on arguing until 1987 had been ushered in. What did we argue about? About the same thing, trying our hardest to make politics and morality meet, although we knew well by experience that this was often a labour of Sisyphus. We had lived, by and large, similar lives, and all that had happened beginning with 1953 was indelibly imprinted on our memories. Yet we could not agree even about seemingly simple things—what is baseness and what is highmindedness, what is meant by sharing the lot of the people and what is meant by closing one's eyes to it....

It would be easiest of all to attribute to the national character the habit of debating, of constantly searching for an answer to the question, "what is to be done?" To say it is an inborn trait and there is nothing to be done about it. But to my mind it is more a matter of our national destiny. We have always started out on unbeaten paths. And on no section of the path traversed could we stroll along, whistling gaily and not thinking about whether we were going the right way or about what to do next. To set out on such a mindless ramble is to risk breaking a leg, if not a neck....

Our development moves from faith to knowledge, from the axiom to the theorem. Much has to be demonstrated anew. And that applies to everything. To the approach to Lenin as well—here it is a matter of moving from blind worship to perception of Lenin, the man, and of what he accomplished. Every generation has its own road to Lenin and its own attitude to him. In our time many questions arise, more perhaps than ever before. His contemporaries recall that Lenin could not stand drawn curtains, never permitted his office windows to be draped, the thought of being cut off from the outside world was intolerable. We too want to "open the curtains" to look freely from the present to the real past. To look and decide for ourselves what there is in that past we need today.

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And the questions that exercise our minds are not contrived, they are heard on all sides, at intimate gatherings, at lectures and in the family circle.

When you stop to think, much that was taken for granted appears in a different light. How often do we say, for instance, we must live and work as Lenin did. But who, unless he is devoid of a critical approach to himself, can say: "I live and work like Lenin"?

You can't make a carbon copy of a human being. Lenin's example is not a stereotyped pattern to be imitated. It is the embodiment of the very meaning of life, of the supreme principles which the human race has evolved from its beginnings to the present day. To follow Lenin's example one must be a personality, one for whom there can be no divergence between conviction and action.

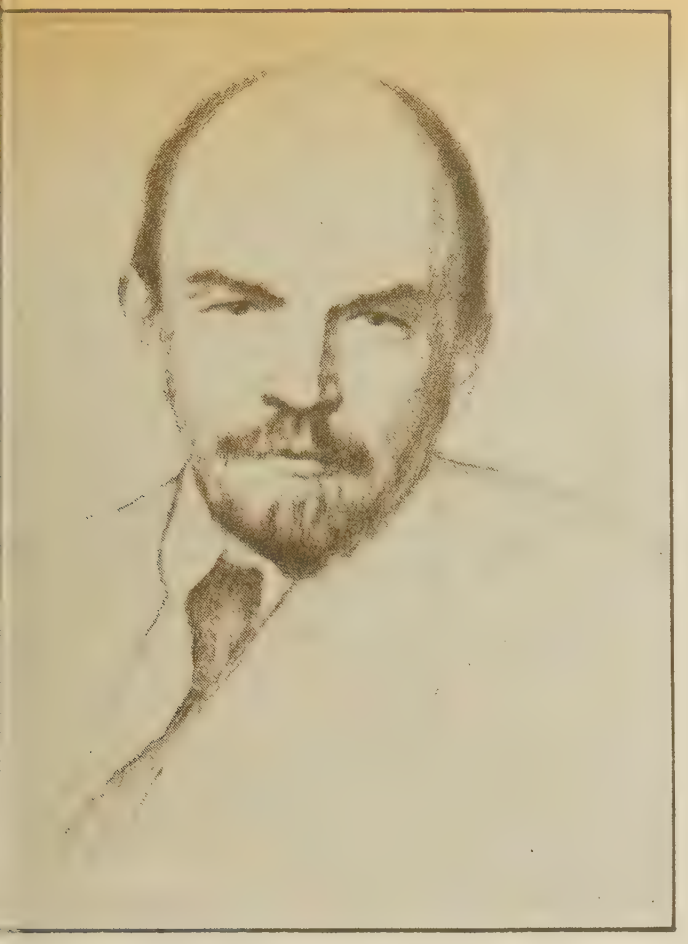
We ask about this and are perplexed about many other things. And we want to be answered by those to whom our questions are addressed, so that voices that have at times fallen silent in our memories should be heard again.

GORKY. In 1917 and 1918 my relations with Lenin were far from what I would have wished them to be; but it could not be otherwise. I differed with the Communists on the question of the role of the intelligentsia in the Russian revolution....

LENIN. You are a strange person, in literature you seem to be a good realist, but in your relations with people you are a romantic. You see everyone as a victim of history. You want to convince me that the militant party of the working class is primarily obliged to see to the comforts of the intelligentsia.

GORKY. The Russian intelligentsia has always been and will long continue to be the sole dray horse harnessed to the heavy waggon of Russian history.

LENIN. The revolution can be successfully carried out only with the majority of the population as the independ-



He ruled men's minds
And therefore the nation.

Boris Pasternak

Drawing by Rudolf Khachatryan

ent makers of history.

The armed uprising in Petrograd had won. The decrees On Peace and On Land had been adopted. But how to govern the country without established organizations either in the centre or in the localities?

What was to be done?

LENIN. **Workers' control** over production, storage, purchase and sale of all products and raw materials shall be introduced in all enterprises.

You workers Ivanov, Petrov, Sidorov will now exercise authority over those who formerly ruled over you.

What to do with the landlords' estates? Peasant delegates came to the Smolny for an answer.

LENIN. The Council of People's Commissars calls upon the peasants to take all power into their own hands in their respective localities....

You peasants Ivanov, Petrov and Sidorov can dispose of the land.

The army was still in the trenches and the peace treaty with Germany had yet to be concluded....

LENIN. Soldiers! Let the regiments at the front immediately elect representatives to start formal negotiations for an armistice with the enemy. The Council of People's Commissars authorizes you to do this.

You soldiers Ivanov, Petrov, Sidorov are given this right.

—Worker, peasant, soldier—Ivanov, Petrov, Sidorov. The Revolution! How long ago that was! We live today in a smoothly running world with established rules....

—We hear about the revolution from childhood, in school and even in kindergarten. As a model rather for romantic emulation than for application to everyday affairs? Who would venture to tackle them in so simplistic a way: action from below, without waiting for anyone? Who, I ask you, Minister Ivanov, Chairman Petrov, General Sidorov? Times have changed.

—It has been rightly observed that with the passage of years the mind becomes encumbered with stereotypes. You begin to think that sweeping popular action was possible only at the time of the revolution. But that was the time of war communism and limited electoral rights. Lenin called it only a preliminary stage in history. In the first years of Soviet power he reminded us that we had not yet reached the stage at which the working people could participate in government. Apart from the law, there was still the level of culture which you cannot subject to any law.

—All this is in the past. We live in a state of the whole people. The cultural level is different and so are many other things.

—The time is different but the truth is always the truth. We yearn for revolutionary changes—the scope of which depends on each and all of us, on how actively people respond, and not just respond, but begin to govern their own lives.

—It is not enough to cite Lenin, we must follow his path. And that means not marking time, not moving one step forward and two steps back. It means going farther.

—Farther than Lenin?

—Of course! To go farther in the work of the Soviets, in the electoral system, in everything that brings us nearer to the affairs of the state and makes the voice of each of us more weighty. To go farther in search of ways of doing this today.

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LENIN. Never in history has there been a revolution in which it was possible to lay down one's arms and rest on one's laurels after the victory. Whoever thinks such revolutions are possible is not only no revolutionary, but the worst enemy of the working class.

With the end of the civil war the policy of war communism outlived itself. Whereupon advocates appeared of moving forward by "tightening the screws."

LENIN. Such a policy would be foolish and suicidal for the party that tried to apply it. It must be admitted that there were some Communists who sinned "in thought, word and deed" by adopting just such a policy. We shall try to rectify these mistakes. It is imperative to correct them, otherwise things will come to a very sorry state.

In December 1920 at a conference of non-party peasants, Lenin listened to the speakers and made notes, trying to reproduce their own words:

"The peasant must be given an incentive. Otherwise it will not work out. I saw wood under compulsion. But you can't till the soil under compulsion.

"Those who do the work must be given preference and not those who go mushrooming."

The new economic policy, underlying which was the transition from the surplus-appropriation system to the tax in kind, was under consideration. One can imagine how much data had to be gathered in the localities, how many talks there were, how many meetings with peasants.

LENIN. To the chairman of the Ufa Gubernia executive committee: Please convey to Beketovo village peasants Alexei Shaposhnikov and Taras Kondrov an invitation to come at once to Moscow for consultation on important matters relating to the peasantry and peasant farming.

The peasants did come to Lenin, and on their return home they addressed a conference of non-party peasants in Ufa. Reading the minutes of that conference, one can imagine what the talk in Lenin's office was about.

PEASANT. We don't know why we have been summoned. We've heard that people have been called in from all corners of Russia to find out what is going on in the provinces.

LENIN. I would like to know how things are going in the localities, in your own village, for example.

PEASANT. Our life has become very hard, unbearable.

LENIN. What has made it unbearable for you?

PEASANT. The surplus appropriation and compulsory labour are altogether unbearable. Along come the surplus-

appropriation people, you give, and then they come a second and third time, until they've taken all you've got. It's the same with cattle—they leave you only one cow.

LENIN. Nothing can ruin us but our own mistakes.... No one issued any such orders.

PEASANT. We also don't know why this is done.

LENIN. What are we going to do about it?

PEASANT. That's for you to decide. But if you go on like this, you will kill any desire to work.

LENIN. Suppose we replace surplus appropriation with a tax? It would be levied on the harvest. Once he has paid his tax, the peasant could do whatever he wants with the rest.

PEASANT. In that case every peasant would do his best to produce an extra pood of grain. You hand in the amount you're taxed and the rest is yours to dispose of. That will be easier for us.

LENIN. Now tell me this, please. Why is it that when the land belonged to the landlords there was plenty of grain; it was sold abroad and there was enough left for Russia? But now you've got the land from the landlords and there is a shortage of grain.

PEASANT. The land passes from hand to hand. And after all, the land is our provider, our beloved mother. If we do not till the soil there will be no grain.

LENIN. This is something to think about.... Satisfy the wish of the non-party peasants for the substitution of a tax in kind for the surplus-appropriation system....

GORKY. I know that he loved people, not ideas. You know how he adapted ideas when the interests of people demanded it.

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—We quote Lenin and each time it is a pleasure to find that what he said then might well have been said today. Though at times this is also saddening. As, for instance, when I go outside and see that at the construction site next door glass is being smashed and good roofing spoiled. How many fine words have been said about the advanced mentality of the workingman? In this connection one cannot help remembering Lenin's caution that we must learn to ignore phrasemongering.

—Lenin wrote that the mentality of the petty proprietor whose only thought is to grab all he can and let the rest go hang—that mentality is a more powerful enemy than all the Kornilovs, Dutovs and Kaledins (tsarist generals) put together.

—The Kaledins and Dutovs are gone and forgotten, but the desire to grab still makes itself felt, the desire to be master of everything.... Some people, one commentator wrote, have interpreted this in their own peculiar way: up to the factory gates all is mine, and beyond them—it's no holds barred.

We grumble among ourselves about things being done as no proprietor would permit, thereby showing that we do not consider ourselves the proprietors.

GORKY. At that time, in the nineteen twenties, I was up to my ears in trivialities of everyday life. There were many absurdities but nothing to laugh at. I complained to Lenin about the predominance of the petty things of life. I was often very sharp with him, I did not spare him. One could talk to him as to no one else.... I am distressed by the attitude of workers to their own labour.

LENIN. What you are saying is that millions of proletarians are for the most part ignorant, backward, unlettered. But what can we do about it? We have no support other than that of the proletarians who follow their party.

GORKY. In Petrograd workers pull down wooden houses for fuel, breaking up window frames, smashing the panes, and spoiling sheet metal roofing for no good reason. But in their own houses the roofs leak and the windows are boarded up with plywood.... However, I presume that you think on a broader plane. Such trifles do not reach you.

LENIN. You are mistaken if you think I attach no significance to trifles, besides these are not trifles, what you have noted is an undervaluation of labour. No, of course, these are not trifles: we are poor and we must know the value of every log of wood, every kopek.... But how can you blame the worker for not yet realizing that he is now the master of everything? Awareness of this will be slow in coming and even then will come only to Socialists. We do not claim, nor do we expect quick successes in this field. We know that this task will take an entire historical epoch. It will take generations, but that does not mean it will take centuries.

—Of course, for the socialist mentality to assert itself in each and everyone a whole epoch is needed. But what are the time limits?

—Let us return to Lenin again: he said he considered this urgently necessary, indeed most important of all. But that most important thing has not yet come to pass. We are often ashamed to admit it. Why? Because perhaps we unwittingly see Lenin as a superman. As if he could be responsible for everything—this man who could see through the years but to whom it was not given to live, work and resolve problems together with us. Not given for more than half a century now.... We must ask ourselves: was everything done yesterday and is everything being done today as Lenin counselled, indeed insisted?

—The task, then, is to go farther than Lenin. And also in some respects to turn back to where we failed—to what we put off, bypassed, dismissed in haste. No miner will venture to move ahead in his drift unless the timbering is secure....

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LENIN. You must first lay solid bridgeways, built on personal incentives and on cost-accounting, otherwise you will not reach communism, otherwise you will not lead tens upon tens of millions of people to communism. Not exclusively relying on enthusiasm but with the help of enthusiasm....

The Council of People's Commissars was considering estimates for the development of peat fields. Lenin presided over the session. A representative of the central administration of the peat industry (Glavtorf) was reporting.

THE GLAVTORF REPRESENTATIVE. Now about the conditions at the peat fields. I am referring to the housing. As can be seen from the estimates, every wooden barrack will cost four thousand rubles to build.

The representative of the People's Commissariat of Finance (Narkomfin) objected.

NARKOMFIN REPRESENTATIVE. Impermissible extravagance! The barracks are temporary structures, and no more than two thousand rubles should be spent on them.

Meanwhile Lenin, as was his wont at meetings of the Council of People's Commissars, was scribbling notes. To the Glavtorf representative he wrote:

"Have you ever built barracks?"

GLAVTORF. Of course I have!

"What about you?" Lenin asked in a note to the Narkomfin representative.

NARKOMFIN REPRESENTATIVE. No, I haven't.

LENIN. It is better to speak the truth than to be a minister.... There are two motions. The first, submitted by the comrade who **has built** barracks, to allocate four thousand rubles. The second, submitted by the comrade who has **not built** barracks, to allocate 2,000 rubles....

To be guided by common sense, always and in everything. Who could object to that? Nevertheless the debate continues. And the opponent—like the man from the Finance Commissariat, for instance—is not always defeated.... Someone, for example, undertakes to work for three and expects to be paid accordingly. But he is told: you want to line your pockets.

—Instructions, restrictions, warnings, regulations.... Follow them blindly and indolence may appear to be in the order of things, and action a transgression. Everybody talks about it, everybody is dissatisfied, but the swamp of bureaucracy has yet to be overcome. What is to be done?

—Management is not just a matter of accepting the circumstances and blaming them. The circumstances must be changed if they are a hindrance to working and living.

It's better not to change anything—better for yourself, of course, not for the cause. This approach is particularly noticeable today. The circumstances have changed, but this is not to the taste of some.

Formerly they said they were anxious to do something rational and useful but would not be allowed to. Now they are told: go ahead and do it. But they prefer to wait and see....

—The need to bend every effort to produce more steel and to extract more oil is self-evident. But what about the battle of opinions, reappraisal of authorities, the battle against all that impedes progress? That would seem to be for the select few, not for you and me, but for someone else, someone higher up, to concern themselves with.

In 1921 the Communists of Bakury District of Saratov Gubernia wrote to Lenin....

LENIN. The secretary of your organization has informed me in writing that at the request of the peasants you have decided to let me know through him of the counterrevolutionary activities in your district committed by certain food-supply workers who are ill-treating poor peasants, robbing them for personal gain, encouraging illicit distilling, getting drunk, raping women, provoking attacks on Soviet power, etc.

What action did Lenin take? One can be sure that once these crimes reached the knowledge of Lenin himself, the offenders were punished....

LENIN. You ask me to take steps here in Moscow to put an end to these counterrevolutionary actions. But to fight on the spot, with all your strength against counterrevolution is one of the most important tasks of local party organizations, including yours. Your bounden duty is to secure the arrest and prosecution before the Revolutionary Tribunal of counterrevolutionaries and scoundrels like those about whom you are reporting.

—Criticize, stand up for your opinion and win your point. But what guarantee is there that your criticism will be supported, your proposal adopted? What guarantee is there that you will not suffer for your pains? There are plenty of examples of that happening. Remember what Bertolt Brecht wrote: "Unhappy the land that needs heroes."

—What of humanity without heroes? Lenin once remarked that when we sing "and the last fight let us face" that unfortunately is a slight untruth; this is not our final struggle.

—Gorky wrote that the heroism of Lenin was by no means rare in Russia. Modest, ascetic, selfless devotion of an honest Russian revolutionary intellectual unshakably convinced of the possibility of social justice on earth....

GORKY. For me what was truly great about Lenin was his uncompromising, unquenchable hatred of human misery, his ardent belief that misery is not an ineradicable basis of life, but an abomination which people must and can sweep away.

Gorky was to write this after Lenin's death. But earlier, in 1920, there was an article by Gorky in the magazine The Communist International entitled "Vladimir Ilyich Lenin."

GORKY. Lenin, to my mind, is the source of energy without whose influence the Russian revolution could not have taken the form it has.... Let me say that my personal feelings for Lenin play no part when I write about him. I see him as a person subject to my observation on a par with all other people and phenomena that cannot but interest me as a chronicler of my country. Lenin is an idealist in the sense that every fibre of his being is concentrated on a single idea—the idea of universal good. His private life is such that in an epoch in which religious sentiment predominated, Lenin would have been considered a saint. I know that the Philistine will be enraged by this statement, that many comrades will smile, and Lenin himself will have a good laugh....

LENIN. Draft of a Political Bureau resolution. The Political Bureau regards as utterly inappropriate the **articles** by Gorky published in issue No. 12 of The Communist International, inasmuch as such articles not only contain **nothing** communist, but much that is **anti**-communist. In the future articles of **this kind** are on **no** account to be published in The Communist International.

The Political Bureau resolution was adopted. Thus, Lenin's reaction turned out to be quite different from what Gorky had expected. Life, history is not a stage production in which only one figure can be spotlighted leaving in the shadow the Party, the masses, in a word, the true makers of history.

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GORKY. Undemanding, a stranger to the habits of smoking and drinking, preoccupied from morning till night with work of the most complex and difficult kind, he never thought of himself, but was always concerned about the needs of his comrades.

There is a certificate issued to Lenin by the managing board of the Council of People's Commissars:

"...Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin) engages in mental labour for an unlimited number of hours daily, in view of which he is entitled to a first-category food and bread ration card."

—Lenin fought for social equality. But he was opposed to levelling. Incidentally, this is always recalled whenever the question of privilege comes up.

—A person who is really dedicated to the establishment of social equality cannot be a stranger to the idea of the most elementary equality—equality with regard to oneself, to one's way of life.... A parcel is handed to you, while someone else is told he is not entitled to it. This may be embarrassing. But worse still is the fact that you cannot understand the feelings of the one who has been refused. Yet tomorrow you might find yourself advising him how he ought to live. And wondering why he does not understand you.

—There is any amount of talk about privileges. Some are undeserved and that is bad. Others are coming to you, and that is normal. But is that the important thing? If it's coming to you why not take it, without asking questions? But there is such a thing as self-denial. No cultured, intelligent person can be devoid of the capacity of self-denial.

—Do you know who marvel most at the austerity of Lenin's private life? Let me try to put it delicately—those who are not too familiar with higher things of life. For them to forego an opportunity for material gain is a feat nothing short of valour.

—When we speak of Lenin's modesty, are we not overlooking some other traits of his character? As examples of that modesty we recall that he issued a reprimand for what he called an unwarranted increase of his salary as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and also his reminder that he was paying personally for the books he used. But are we not giving ourselves away by doing so? To speak of modesty in this context is to assume that a Communist can attain a position in which existing rules no longer apply to him, and that observance of the rules is testimony to his modesty. What is more important, in my view, is Lenin's insistence on the observance of the law. For a law remains a law only so long as it is obligatory for all.

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There was a time when it was thought it was above all necessary to speak of Lenin the man. Supreme manifestations of the human spirit command attention at all times. Especially in unhappy times. There was a preoccupation with the past, but time went on and our time came changing the present and overcoming what has outlived itself. Time again turns our attention to Lenin—the designer and builder of the new society.

Today we are constantly asking ourselves and each other questions, asking and answering. That is how it always is in times of sharp turns. Yes, in many respects the future has been charted and no few conclusions have been drawn from the past. But conclusions are only milestones on the highroad of independent thought. And every thinking person must take that road. For his own sake, so as to be able to answer the question: what is to be done? How to act, what to do in the time allotted him?

I read the interview with Mr Noboru Goto, President of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in your issue No. 48 of December 8 last. It was most depressing!

Firstly, Mr Noboru Goto's opinions as to the establishment of joint Soviet-Japanese enterprises.

Mr Goto defines their expediency—for Japan of course—as being "in a very limited field," inasmuch as the "world market is crammed with raw materials." Imagine, raw materials! Speaking for Japanese business, the President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry does not seem to see any other field for investment in cooperation with the U.S.S.R. All Mr Goto is prepared to discuss is "the processing of marine products and the exploitation of forestry resources." Do we really have nothing but marine products and forestry resources to interest Japan! After all, our exports even to industrialized countries include technologies, industrial products, and so on. Even granted the comparative inadequacy, within the context of the entire Soviet Union, of the industrial infrastructure of the Soviet Far East, this is rather humiliating.

Secondly, and more importantly.

Mr Goto talks quite categorically about the "territorial issue." Is it in this connection that we seek a dialogue! We would be about as likely to "enter into a dialogue" with the F.R.G. about the 1937 frontiers, including Eastern Prussia!

As I see it, Japanese big business is absolutely consistent in its implementation of the programme enunciated by Hirohito at the time of the country's unconditional surrender in 1945, this being to lead the world in the scientific and technological fields, and then... whether in military or economic terms or in science and technology, Japan is always expansionist.

V. ROGOVOI
Krasnodar, U.S.S.R.

No, It's a Useful Beginning

Reading your letter I recalled the dictum of a philosopher of the past to the effect that wherever common sense is at work the heart takes a rest. I think you put too much heart into your letter, which probably prevented you taking an unbiassed view of what Noboru Goto, President of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, actually said in his New Times interview, and of the idea of joint Soviet-Japanese enterprises in general.

I take Mr Goto's interview to be his reaction to Mr Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech last summer. As you will remember, the Soviet leader said specifically that the geographical position of the Soviet Far East makes it incumbent on us to exploit marine resources to the maximum. He also pointed to the chronic inadequacy in those areas of enterprises capable of processing these resources. Turning his attention to forestry resources, Mikhail Gorbachev emphasized the importance of obtaining at least semi-manufactures if not finished products from Far Eastern raw materials.

As far as one can judge, Mr Goto analyzed Mikhail Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech carefully, usual practice for Japanese businessmen with regard to our programme documents on matters of economics and commerce. In replying to the New Times correspondent, he understandably put forward his own point of view with respect to joint enterprises. "As for the processing of marine products and the exploitation of forestry resources," Mr Goto said, "here joint enterprises would be appropriate." As for what he says about the world market being saturated with raw materials, this is a fact, and to expect a businessman to contemplate investing money in such circumstances in the extraction of raw materials and minerals would be naive, to say the least.

Japanese businessmen's analysis of Mikhail Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech has already yielded concrete results. Japanese firms have offered to set up eleven joint enterprises. Three leading fishing and fish-processing concerns would like to engage in the joint production of foods from pollack. There are also plans to cooperate in the joint output of finished articles from timber.

You claim to be offended that the Japanese have not offered to engage in the joint manufacture of industrial goods. As I see it, I think it would be far more disappointing for us not to find in our shops good semi-prepared fish products, from which to make appetizing dishes. In the joint enterprises that are being envisaged, the Japanese, who have a tradition of rationally processing marine products and preparing a variety of delicacies from them, will also be handing over technologies and know-how, which will enable our shops to offer a wider range of foodstuffs. We could say the same with regard to the joint production of such commodities as, for instance, furniture and prefabricated housing.

The joint enterprise is something new both for us and for the Japanese, for the two countries have never had this type of economic cooperation with one another. Understandably, the Japanese would like to make sure that such initiatives are viable. Food and wood-processing enterprises do not call for heavy investment. Their construction does not require an exceptionally intensive effort nor is it economically risky. For this reason they would be quite appropriate as proving grounds to determine the merits and demerits of joint economic undertakings.

I personally think such experiments will be successful. Many Japanese economists and industrialists are of the same mind. Prof. Ogava, a lecturer at Nagoya University and a consultant to the Japanese association for trade with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, is convinced that joint Soviet-Japanese enterprises are promising. Moreover, all else apart, he sees the effective government supervision of such enterprises in the U.S.S.R. as a guarantee of this. Mr Suetomi, chief of the Moscow agency of the commercial company Mitsui Bussan, said that "at last a favourable wind is filling the sails of the bilateral business relationship."

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The Self-Exiles...

CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT

Some Soviet citizens, for various reasons, leave the Soviet Union for good in search of happiness elsewhere.

It is regrettable that they believe capitalist propaganda and do not heed sensible arguments. But I feel even worse when such people are allowed to come back after "seeing the light" and deciding to return. I can't understand it. To regain one's homeland is as impossible as to love one's mother after one has betrayed her. The people who leave know what they are doing. And here we are forgiving them everything. Is this your idea of justice?

A. ZHOVNIR
Zaporozhye Region,
U.S.S.R.

SORRY FOR THEM ALL THE SAME

Lately I have read a great deal about people who have experienced the bitterness of losing their homeland and had a hard time abroad. I understand with my mind that they have only themselves to blame for their hard lot. But I feel a pang of pity when I see tears in their eyes. I say to myself: let them come back as long as they haven't done much harm to our country while in exile. Many of them have children. I can't bear the thought of children being raised without a homeland.

P. VASILYEVA
Irkutsk, U.S.S.R.

LIKE PLANTATION SLAVES

Our family came to California in 1905 when my father, a Ukrainian, emigrated from Russia. After coming to the United States he was out of work for a long time until at last he hired himself out as a labourer in a copper mine. He died in 1929 from silicosis. So I had to go to work at 14. And I have slaved away, often without a holiday, until the age of 62. I worked six days a week, ten hours a day to be paid $2.50 a week. I slaved for less "pay" than the Negro slaves got here in the 18th century. I have long realized that only socialist society gives life and a future. In the world I have lived in there is no organization that gives real protection to people's rights and interests. I was worn out, never having had a future—and never would have one unless I could get out of the U.S.A. and go to the U.S.S.R.

Katherine SENICK
California, U.S.A.

I Welcome This

In recent years the press over here has often written about those who left the Soviet Union for the West. Now that dozens of them have gone back our papers report such facts with puzzlement, if at all.

I welcome the Soviet government's step in allowing those of them who wished to return to their homeland.

Jim WHEELER
Toronto, Canada

The clipping from my home town newspaper Minneapolis Star and Tribune shows a silhouette made on the ground from papers by the homeless in memory of Arvid Dulak, one of the millions of homeless Americans. He was crushed to death while sleeping in a trashcan. The newspapers reported the accident but did not explain it. On the contrary, Arvid Dulak is "reprimanded" even in death for sleeping where he didn't belong.

Ronald SCHLEYER
Minneapolis, U.S.A.

In 1947 the United States was planning the occupation of China. That is revealed by

DIRECTIVE 476/2

This document, issued by the U.S. supreme military command, is quite lengthy. A standard staff paper in form, it comprises 180-odd pages of text, plus maps, tables and charts under a heading which specifies the operation code name (Moonrise), date of issue (August 29, 1947) and reference number (476/2, the "2" indicating that there were several versions of the operation planned). The Joint War Plans Committee (JWPC) which compiled the top-secret document was subordinate to the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. armed forces. The authors meant business: they even warned in the opening note that the paper "should be read carefully."

Well, let us read it carefully, and let us try and find out, first of all, where, in what part of the world the operation was to have been carried out.

Scene of Action

The answer to this question is found on page 5, which characterizes the area marked as the scene of Operation Moonrise:

"In the project area, South China to Eastern Siberia and to Alaska, the dominant terrain features are alternate bands of highlands and lowlands extending roughly parallel to the Pacific coast of the continents. The mountain ranges are moderately rugged, sparsely forested and average only 5,000 to 8,000 feet in elevation. The lowlands consist chiefly of small plains and plateaus of moderate elevation and long valleys which form connecting corridors between many of the plains. The most prominent series of intermountain basins extending below sea level, forming the Sea of Japan and the South China, East China, Okhotsk, and Bering seas. See Annex 'A' to Appendix (page 60) for details."

Indeed, pp. 60-76 carry detailed information on the following areas: Kamchatka, Sakhalin, Southeastern and Northeastern Siberia, China (Manchuria, Northern and Eastern China), Korea, Japan (Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku islands), Alaska. The most thorough analysis is given to the physico-topographical features of China with regard to which the following significant observation is made:

"Military operations in China must take into consideration the various climatic and weather conditions encountered."

So, the U.S. was planning military operations in China in 1947? In a country which, along with the United States, was a member of the United Nations and even a permanent member of the Security Council?

Early Neoglobalism

In a secret memo for President Truman in the autumn of 1946 his special counsel Clark Clifford recommended the following:

"Our policies must also be global in scope. By time-honoured custom we have regarded 'European Policy,' 'Near Eastern Policy,' 'Indian Policy' and 'Chinese Policy' as separate problems."

This is an important "methodological" point: if we are to consider American plans with regard to any one country, we must determine, first and foremost, the place of this country in Washington's global plans. Clifford defined these plans as those of total war against the Soviet Union.

The chronology of the Pentagon's adventurist scheme has now come to light: the first plan for an atomic attack on the Soviet Union is dated November 3, 1945; an attempt was made in it to predict—although in a most general way—third countries' likely behaviour in the event of a war.

Elaborated in the document, Operation Pincher (a JWPC directive of February 2, 1946) said that as it unleashed the war the U.S. must help its prospective "allies" secure the Bering Sea—Sea of Japan—Yellow Sea line, which would, in turn, call for a more active use of Alaska, the U.S. bases in the Pacific, on the mandated Japanese Isles, in Japan and in Ryukyu and, possibly, of the ports and bases in China.

Why the bases in China? Here is the answer:

"Tsingtao, Shanghai and Chengtu were considered in a search for an air base area providing access to four industrial regions of the U.S.S.R.: Novosibirsk, Irkutsk, Kemerovo and Stalinsk. These target areas are beyond the range of B-29 aircraft from air bases in Japan or Okinawa, and are shielded by the tallest of the Himalayas from those based in India."

Two Plans in One

This, however, is just one aspect of the secret American plans of 1946-47. It would be wrong to think that the Soviet Union was the only target: the plans were also aimed at China, and the Chinese revolution. The Broiler Plan, which replaced the Pincher Plan in 1947, had the following to say in this connection:

"The object of operations in the Far East would be... to prevent the creation of a political and military situation in the Far East which will force the acceptance of the Communist ideology by the peoples of Asia."

Therefore, "it will be necessary to furnish some support to Chinese Nationalist forces" because in their relations with the United States they would adhere to the line they had taken during World War II.

Another directive of that time (No. 1769/1), issued on April 29, 1947, and entitled "United States Assistance to Other Countries from the Standpoint of National Security," was couched in rather cynical terms.

"China's greatest military asset is manpower. However, China does not have the industry to equip this

manpower for warfare nor does she produce sufficient food to maintain this manpower in fighting condition."

The authors of the directive pointed out, just as cynically, that it did not make sense to invest too heavily in the Kuomintang because its efficacy was dubious. Nevertheless, Washington reasoned, if the American offensive "against our primary ideological opponents," i.e., against the U.S.S.R., began, and "the success of this offensive resulted in the isolation of communism among the undeveloped countries of the Far East, it might be possible to keep it isolated there by the imposition of an economic quarantine."

Proceeding from "the assumption that the next war will be ideological, and the thesis that current aid shall be given only in the interest of our national security," Directive No. 1769/1 put Japan rather than Chiang Kai-shek's China at the top of the list of countries which entered into the American plans with regard to the Far East. Nevertheless, paragraph 7 of the Broiler Plan pointed, once again, to the need to support Chiang Kai-shek's troops and regime and to oppose the People's Liberation Army of China.

In the War Years

In wartime, U.S. relations with the Chiang Kai-shek regime had been geared primarily to the requirements of the anti-Japan war effort. Japan had occupied a sizable proportion of China's territory: Manchuria, Northern, Central and Southeastern China, and the entire sea coast of the country with the important ports of Tianjin, Shanghai and Canton. The Kuomintang government troops were formally on the Allies' side, but were of little help to them. General Joseph Stilwell, U.S. chief military adviser in China, repeatedly sent alarming reports to Washington about the disintegration of the regime and the unwillingness to fight the Japanese on the part of Chiang Kai-shek who preferred to nurture plans for civil war and obviously sabotaged combat action against Japan by concentrating his efforts on fighting the national liberation armies and blockading the liberated parts of China.

When 1945—the year of victory in Europe and the Far East—came, the U.S. military and political quarters, who realized that the war could not be completed without Soviet assistance, began to seek ways of ensuring their interests in China as it looked forward to its liberation day. On July 21, 1945, on President Truman's instructions, the Joint Chiefs of Staff issued a directive to the troops stationed in the Far East to stand by for immediate action, possibly before "the entry of the Russians." The "action" stood for an urgent landing of U.S. troops in Manchuria and Korea.

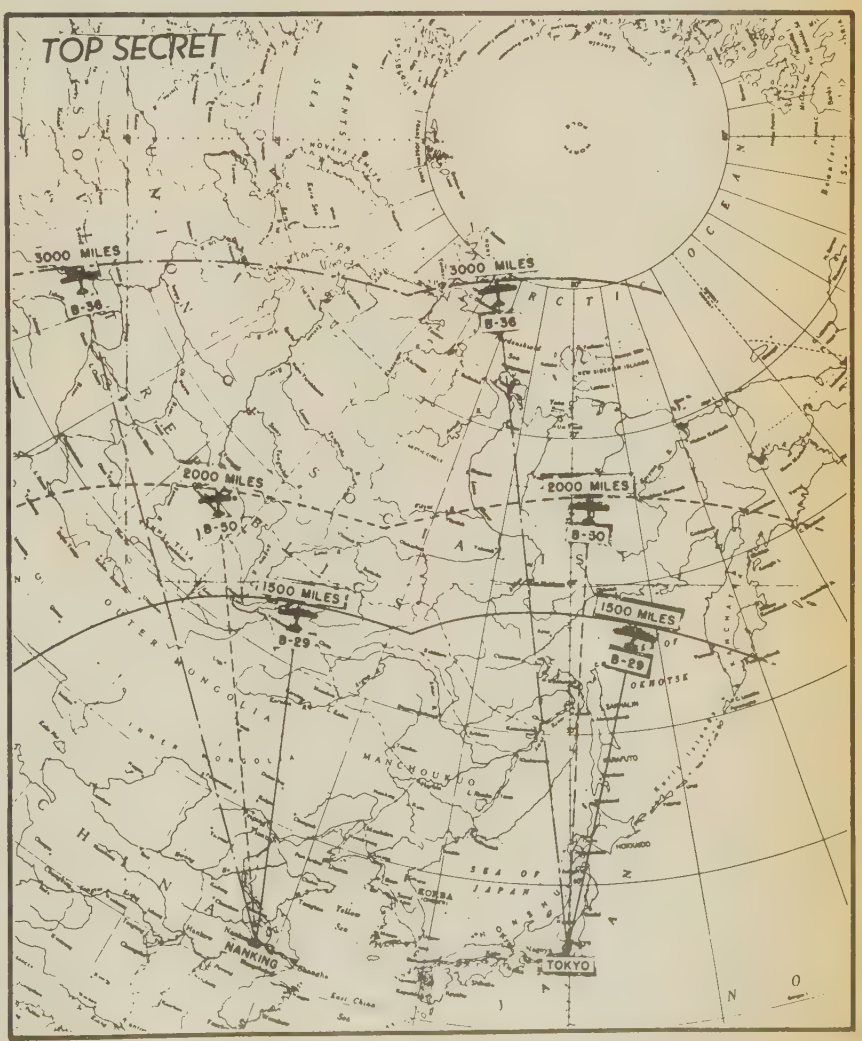
In pursuance of their allied duty, the Soviet troops launched the offensive in the Far East on August 9. Two days later, on August 11, the Joint Chiefs of Staff advised the high command of the U.S. armed forces in the Far East that the President deemed it necessary to prepare in advance to occupy the port of Dairen (Dalny) and the Korean port of Seoul immediately following the surrender of Japan, unless those ports had already been taken by Soviet troops.

General Wedemeyer, chief of the U.S. military mission in China, informed Washington on August 12 that he urgently needed seven divisions for the purpose. On the same day, however, the JCS called its directive off "in view of the rapid advance of the Russians."

Instead, it was decided to give Chiang Kai-shek direct help in capturing the provinces of Northeastern and Central China.

The operation was started on September 30 with the landing of the First Division in Tanggu (near Tianjin). Following that, the armada of the Seventh Fleet tried to land American and Kuomintang troops in Dairen, which ran counter to the Soviet-Chinese agreements then in force. Having suffered a setback, the American command landed the troops in other parts of China. As a result, about 113,000 American troops found themselves in China towards the end of 1945, which could by no means be justified by the need "to disarm Japanese troops."

At the Moscow foreign ministers' conference in 1945, the U.S. went all out to prevent the decision on the withdrawal of all foreign troops from China being adopted. The American representatives claimed that the foreign troops were needed there for "supervision" and the evacuation of Japanese POWs. This argument did not sound very convincing as much time had passed after the surrender. The U.S. was compelled to sign a resolution on the desirability of a troop pullout. After the U.S.S.R. had announced the final withdrawal of its troops from Manchu-



Plan Moonrise: proposed U.S. bombing targets in China and the U.S.S.R.

DIRECTIVE 476/2

ria by April 15, 1946, the U.S. was compelled to reduce the numerical strength of its armed forces there. By June 1947 there remained only 6,180 American servicemen in Manchuria.

This brings us to the period when Operation Moonrise was being worked out (1947).

"American Forces Would Meet with Less Overt Opposition. . ."

Operation Moonrise was part of the U.S. "double" plan of action against the U.S.S.R., on the one hand, and against the Chinese revolution, on the other. Therefore the military-political objective of the operation was stated as follows:

"To destroy the will of the U.S.S.R. to continue hostilities by a main offensive effort in western Eurasia and the active defence in eastern Asia. Initially to secure the Bering Sea—Sea of Japan—Yellow Sea line with some aid to China while undertaking a maximum strategic air bombardment effort against vital areas of the western U.S.S.R., coupled with operations to secure adequate air bases and with political, psychological, and underground operations in Russian-occupied territories to waste Russian resources."

Such was the overall concept of the operation. Specifically, as applied to China, Operation Moonrise provided for several possible alternative strategies (a practice typical of U.S. military planning at the time).

All aspects of the United States' projected action in China were discussed in terms of the following assumptions:

a) that China remains "a neutral and unoccupied country";

b) that American military forces enter China with the Kuomintang authorities "as an active ally."

The American planners would not have been true to type had they not assumed the possibility of China (Manchuria and Taiwan included), Japan and even Alaska being occupied by Soviet troops. That was only a "plat du jour," however, and even the "analysts" themselves came to the conclusion that the Soviet Union was unlikely to have planned anything of the kind.

As for the proposed American occupation of China, the authors of Operation Moonrise considered it a realistic proposition. Here are their arguments in support of it:

"The United States is the only major power which unquestionably can command a measure of good will among the politically inarticulate masses of China's population. This follows in part from American aid to China during World War II, in part from the fact that the prewar record of the United States in China was comparatively good....

"American forces engaged in military operations would meet with less overt opposition in large parts of China than would those of any other nation. Moreover, since American armies would provide a large proportion of their own supplies, and would be unlikely to requisition foodstuffs by force, one immediate cause for resistance would be avoided."

Some doubts are thrown in for good measure:

"Kuomintang officials could be counted upon to give vocal allegiance and aid to American forces. Their support would be only a partial asset, however. In the first place, standards of governmental efficiency in China are not high; the Kuomintang bureaucracy could not be expected to provide effective administrative services. More important, the Kuomintang lacks a base of positive popular support; as constituted at present it would not be able to enlist the population at large into enthusiastic service on behalf of its allies. On the other hand, largely because the tradition-bound peasant population is not readily aroused, it would be within the capabilities of Kuomintang officialdom both to maintain the outward symbols of governmental authority and to aid in suppressing resistance movements over substantial areas of China."

Whom did the authors expect to resist the occupiers?

"The gravest political danger to American forces would be presented by the Chinese Communist Party. It has an excellently disciplined leadership and a practical programme for gaining peasant support. Given the opportunity to use the presence of American forces to fan the always latent xenophobia of most Chinese, the Communists could become the centre of a resistance movement of serious proportions. Since the fundamental allegiance of the Communist leaders is to Marxist dogma as interpreted by the U.S.S.R. there would be little prospect of successfully winning over to the American cause any significant Communist elements."

Washington believed, however, that there were certain, "internal factors" instrumental to the U.S. occupation of China:

"The Chinese governments have so consistently misruled such minorities as the Mongols in Inner Mongolia and the Moslems in Sinkiang that the instigation of native rebellions would be an easy matter."

Economic Factors

One section of the Moonrise document is rather unusual in that it deals with purely economic problems, or rather with the economic advantages (and disadvantages) of the proposed occupation of China. The planners showed remarkable realism: they promised no special and prompt economic gains from the seizure of China by American forces. The plan considers the "immediate gains" first. I quote:

"Removable facilities are of small total value compared with the productive plants of the United States or the U.S.S.R. Total railroad rolling stock, for example, consists of approximately 1,370 locomotives and 18,000 cars in varying states of disrepair and of a gauge narrower than of the Soviet railroads. Much industrial equipment is either obsolescent, as in the case of many electric power plants, or of little consequence in war economy, as in the case of small flour and vegetable-oil mills.... The return from current output possible in 1947 may safely be neglected."

In short, there would be no economic gains—nothing to plunder even! But the analysts did not give China up as a bad job economically, and arrived at a rather unexpected conclusion.

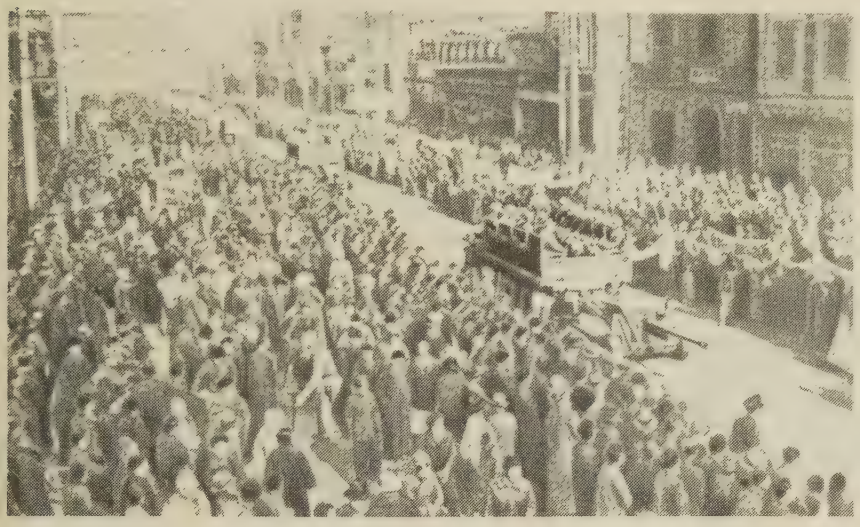
"The circumstances by which an area falls under foreign military control (e. g., under treaty terms), or the anticipated duration of that control may force occupation authorities to consider the broader implications of economic policy. Political objectives and longer-run military necessity may justify the expansion of occupation costs to include responsibility for functioning of the civilian economy. . . . Major returns of economic rehabilitation would be measured largely in terms of the achievement of political objectives."

The important point is that the U.S. was prepared to run the economic risks

involved in occupying China for the sake of its political objectives!

Aim of the Operation

The Moonrise document contains arguments both for and against the occupation of China. The makers of American policy in the Far East had a hard time in 1946 and 1947. Anti-communist stereotypes drove Washington up a blind alley. The revolution in China was winning out in spite of everything, and the reactionaries were on the verge of total defeat. So what did the Americans intend to do next? To learn from history? To wake up to reality?



The National Liberation Army marching into Peking.

Not at all, was the American generals' reply. Why learn? Didn't they have means tested through the decades, through the centuries? The operation was very down to earth and allowed of no alternatives. Here is a sampling of its strictly businesslike annexes to illustrate this:

— disposition of U.S. and British ground forces;

— disposition of Chinese Nationalist Army;

— China areas controlled by Chinese Communists;

— charts of railroads, highways, rivers and ports (in China, Japan, Korea and the Soviet Far East);

— charts of American airfields in the Far East (with bombers' operational radius and bombing targets in Siberia indicated).

The Moonrise document dwells in special detail on the possibilities for troop landings in Far Eastern ports, with each port described after the following pattern:

1) name of port;

2) number of Liberty-type ships* the port can accept at any one time;

3) ship handling capacity (in terms of tonnage).

These criteria were applied to the following Chinese ports: Chinwangtao, Dairen, Port Arthur, Weihaiwei, Chefu, Tsingtao, Nanking, Shanghai, Ningpo, Wuhu, Santuao, Laoyao, Hankow, Amoy, Hongkong, Kwangchowan, Macao, Huilingsan. They could accept more than 350 ships and handle a tonnage of nearly 100,000.

A special annex assessed the landing possibilities in areas that had no ports.

The annexes pertaining to roads and, in particular, to airfields contained some detail. They specified the operational ranges of the bombers stationed on the Aleutian airfield (B-50—2,000 miles to Manchuria, B-36—3,000 miles to Central China) and in Alaska (1,500-3,000 miles to Siberian targets).** Air support for the U.S. ground action was to have been provided by one airborne division, two groups of heavy bombers, three fighter groups, all-weather fighters and airborne troop carriers (one group of each), long-range reconnaissance and weather reconnaissance planes (a squadron of each). As far as naval forces were concerned, the action was to have been supported by one tactical group of aircraft carriers, three groups of hunter-killer escort aircraft carriers, eight submarine squadrons, one squadron of minelayers and 12 patrol aircraft squadrons.

A concrete plan of combat action said, in part:

"The most advantageous area for such purposes would be the Shantung Peninsula. The terrain in this area provides excellent defensive positions, particularly in the immediate vicinity of Tsingtao. The expansive plain which lies just inland from the base of the peninsula contains numerous sites suitable for development as airfields, including VHB bases, and the local area is served by rail and road from the excellent port of Tsingtao. Operating from bases in the Shantung Peninsula, Allied aircraft would be in a position to contest Soviet control of the lines of communication in Korea and those leading into Northern China, to neutralize Dairen, Port Arthur and other Soviet ports on the Yellow Sea and Gulf of Chihli and to contest air superiority over the general area. After air superiority had been attained, Tsingtao would provide an excellent base for naval forces which could be utilized to complete the control of the Gulf of Chihli. The Chinese Nationalist forces do not have the capability of retaining the Shantung area. Substantial Allied assistance—ground, naval and air—would be required."

All seemed set for action, and it only remained to give the go-ahead—but....

The Chinese People Said No

The authors of the Moonrise Plan were unable to make up their minds about what to do: to invade China, to take their time about it, or to give up the whole project altogether.

The answer to the question of whether American occupation was possible and feasible came from elsewhere—from the people of China.

In March 1947 Kuomintang troops mounted an attack on Yanan. Chiang Kai-shek promised that the Communists would be "eliminated" in August or September. The promise was never fulfilled. The United Democratic Army, formed in Manchuria after its liberation, took the counteroffensive at the beginning of 1947. By late 1948, the Kuomintang grouping, half a million strong, had been routed, and the whole of Manchuria liberated. Chiang Kai-shek's supporters panicked and demanded that the U.S. "deal a blow at the Soviet Union" so as to check the advance of the rev-

* The most common type of U.S. transport ships during World War II.

** The whole of China, as well as the Soviet cities of Chita and Khabarovsk were considered to be within the operational radius of B-29 bombers operating from airfields in China, e.g., in Nanking; Novosibirsk within that of B-50s; and Sverdlovsk, within that of B-36 bombers.

olutionary forces. Chiang Kai-shek urged the Americans to do this without delay before the Soviet Union became a strong industrialized power.

It was under these circumstances that the plans for the occupation of China were hatched. Operation Moonrise was top secret in 1947, but General Wedemeyer's report—which demanded that financial and military aid to Chiang Kai-shek be increased, the number of American military experts in China brought up to 10,000, and that Manchuria be put under the great powers' trusteeship—became public knowledge. General Chennault of the U.S. Air Force urged forming American "volunteer forces" and rushing them to China.

But it was too late to save the doomed. President Truman admitted:

"Our position in China offered us little choice. We could not simply wash our hands of the situation.... The other alternative was equally impracticable. That would have been to throw into China unlimited resources and large armies of American soldiers to defeat the Communists, remove the Japanese from the mainland, and compel Russian withdrawal from Manchuria by force."

The President was certainly under an illusion when he wrote about the possibility of "crushing the Communists" (even if he meant doing it by force of arms). Meanwhile, the United Democratic Army made a rapid advance from Manchuria into Northern China where it joined forces with the People's Liberation Army and pushed forward to the Yangzi River.

The U.S. was in no position to change the outcome of the final battles for liberation. "The U.S.A. did not then attack China in force for reasons other than unwillingness to do so. It had its misgivings. The U.S. government feared that the peoples of the Soviet Union, Europe and the world would come out against it," Mao Tse-tung wrote at the time.

Although the Pentagon's Moonrise Plan never materialized, undercover schemes of this kind offer much deeper insight into the policy of a country than what its leaders say in public.

Compiled by
Lev BEZYMENSKY

Bomb for Europe—

and alternatives to the strategy of "deterrence"

ALEXANDER LEBEDEV

The chief argument advanced in favour of a "European bomb" is the alleged superiority of the Warsaw Treaty in conventional armaments. Assessments of this superiority vary widely, from double to fivefold.

Meanwhile, the London International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and various specialized publications, such as the French Défense nationale, have systematically reaffirmed the approximate parity between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO in Europe in conventional weapons and armed forces (with due account taken of the differences in their structure).

Who Is Afraid of Blackmail

Paradoxically, London, Paris, Bonn and their allies, while talking about the East's superiority in conventional, nuclear (medium-range and tactical) and chemical weapons, are avoiding serious discussion of the Warsaw Treaty's proposals for drastic cuts in all these types of weapons.

Is Western Europe indeed so "defenceless" that it needs the nuclear bomb to protect itself, or can the same end be achieved at a smaller risk? An interesting remark on this score was made by Richard Burt, U.S. ambassador to the F.R.G., in an interview for Stern magazine last November. Having in recent months spent much time with the U.S. and West German armed forces, he said he believed the elimination of nuclear weapons in Europe would not leave Western Europe defenceless. And he reassured Europeans that in any case the Old World was under the American strategic umbrella.

Why then must Western Europe stockpile dangerous weapons—both its own and imported—if Washington's strategic forces guarantee its security (against a nonexistent threat, incidentally)?

This is the question that occupies the minds of many West European politicians. The remarks made by former F.R.G. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who shares much of the responsibility for bringing American Pershing 2 and cruise missiles to Europe, are worthy of note. He has said that the Soviet operational-tactical weapons could not serve as an instrument of political blackmail and that the imbalance between East and West in conventional armaments was grossly overestimated. Schmidt has noted that "European conventional forces by themselves could deter the Soviet Union from attack or blackmail without requiring the American nuclear umbrella." The former chancellor went even further, saying that if America continues to threaten to withdraw its troops from Europe, then "the sooner the better."

Perhaps by coincidence, Schmidt seemed to be replying to the recent statement by General Rogers, the American supreme allied commander of NATO forces in Europe, who had threatened to pull out 350,000 U.S. troops from Europe if Britain closed U.S. nuclear bases in its territory.

The word for this in any European language is blackmail. Meanwhile General Rogers is constantly warning West Europeans against blackmail ... by the Soviet Union. True, even he stops short of claiming that the Soviet armies are preparing to cross the Elbe. But he holds out an even more lurid prospect: the Soviet Union could bring Western Europe to its knees without firing a single shot—by brandishing its nuclear superiority. In this connection, it would not be out of place to cite the opinion of the British Labour Party expressed in its recent statement on defence and foreign policy. It says that there has not been a single instance when NATO countries, whether or not they have nuclear weapons in their territory, have been subjected to "nuclear blackmail."

NATO leaders, however, assert that it is only fear of U.S. retaliation that deters the Soviet Union from using blackmail. What, then, is the "deterrent" role of the British and French nuclear weapons? The usual answer is:

For the first part of this article see our previous issue.

as insurance against the possibility of American withdrawal from Western Europe.

The chances that the U.S. would leave West Europeans to their own devices are very remote. The aim of all the current talk about the danger of the United States reverting to its isolationist policy of the 1920s and 1930s has been unambiguously expressed by General Rogers: to scare Western Europe and make it more amenable.

The Americans do not want to withdraw from Western Europe for many reasons, of which the fact that the present West European leaders are asking them not to do so is far from being the chief. It is not a reason at all, but a justification. Nor are sentimental considerations—the common origins of Western civilization in the Mediterranean, ethnic roots and historical ties —of decisive importance, especially for a power committed to a global strategy.

What, then, draws the U.S. to Europe? The need for an American military presence on the continent is usually explained, on both sides of the Atlantic, by the United States' desire to be on the line of confrontation between the two systems and blocs as a guarantor and symbol of Western solidarity.

Another reason, not usually mentioned in the West, is that Washington feels more comfortable and better ensured against unpredictable twists in West European politics—domestic and foreign—with its troops on guard duty on the continent.

A still greater source of confidence to Washington is the presence of its nuclear weapons in Europe. To keep them in Europe is the prime U.S. concern, as Neil Kinnock was given to understand during his recent visit to Washington. He was told that while it was up to the British to decide whether to buy or not to buy Tridents, throwing American nuclear weapons out of the British Isles was another matter.

As noted in the first part of the article, Washington was initially less than enthusiastic about the appearance of British and French nuclear weapons. But it has since learned to derive strategic and economic benefits from them (incidentally, the sale of Tridents to the British is no exercise in philanthropy: it would earn U.S. war manufacturers at least $14 billion). At the same time the U.S. is wary of any signs of excessive West European activity in the direction of autonomous military integration, especially on a nuclear basis. Washington reminds its West European partners that their prime concern should be NATO, and the strengthening (and broadening) of its European base, and not the building of a new structure. Here one can discern the hand of the U.S. military-industrial complex, which hates competition.

Weapon of Assured Suicide

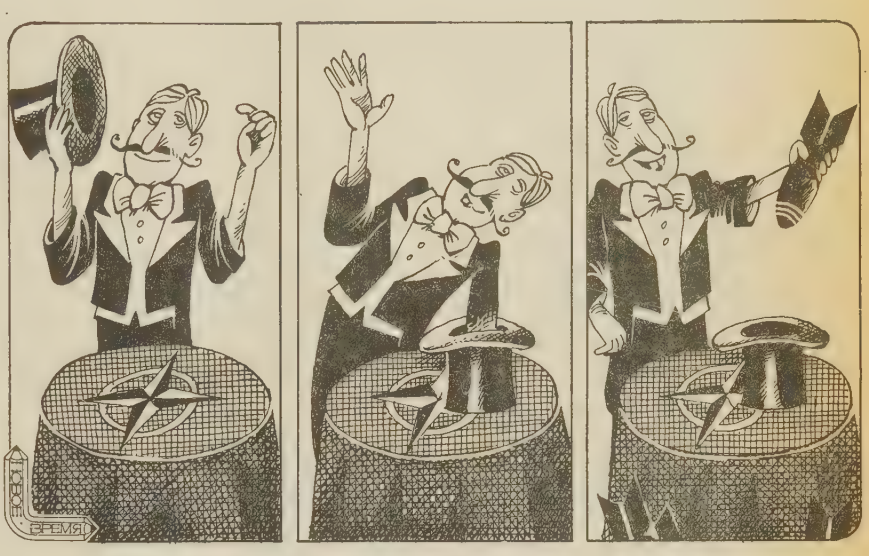
All these issues seem to be the subject of an intense diplomatic struggle of which not much is known. But judging from what comes to the surface there are loose ends in the West European arguments. If London and Paris (as well as Bonn) are so committed to the idea of "European nuclear forces," why are they clinging so desperately to the American medium-range missiles that can reach Soviet territory? If they are seen as an answer to the Soviet SS-20s, then why do Britain and France need their own nuclear weapons?

They do not want their nuclear potential to be classed as European nuclear weapons, as they do not wish it to be counted in the European balance. They prefer to think of their forces as strategic. But as soon as discussion turns to strategic weapons, London and Paris vehemently object to their nuclear forces figuring in any talks or being counted in any reductions.

One might think these forces a mirage. But one cannot manipulate a dozen submarines carrying hundreds of nuclear warheads as a magician manipulates a white rabbit at one moment producing it out of a hat and at the next putting it back.

In short, if the British and French nuclear forces exist (and they are certainly no hallucination), the possibility of their military use cannot be discounted (no matter how crazy such a prospect might appear).

Both the NATO doctrine and the French strategy are geared to a first nuclear strike in the event of conflict in Europe. Should this happen, Britain, France and their partners in Western Europe can easily imagine the consequences of a Soviet retaliatory strike, from which America will not save them.



Cartoon by N Shcherbakov

Such projections, sinister as they are, have to be discussed because a whole science or profession concerned with various scenarios for the escalation of nuclear conflict has been evolved in the West. In one current version, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. exchange nuclear strikes fighting a nuclear duel. Do Britain and France, which possess nuclear weapons, and other West European countries, which have these weapons deployed in their territory, really hope to be left on the sidelines?

It is unreasonable to expect that a country subjected to a nuclear strike would place its trust solely in the good intentions and Christian virtues of the West Europeans, and waste precious time finding out whose particular missile (British, French or one deployed in the F.R.G.) has been fired at the target. The targets, incidentally, are known to have been distributed between the Western allies in advance, and they are situated in Soviet territory.

What, then, is the insurance value of the British and French nuclear forces? A more appropriate term for them would be weapons of assured suicide.

On the other hand, reductions in these weapons, with equivalent cuts in

the Soviet arsenal, would at least bring down the level of nuclear tension in Europe and reduce the danger of an accidental nuclear war. Such measures would be of great political significance as they would demonstrate that it is possible to stop the buildup of nuclear arsenals and start scaling them down and eliminating them. They would prove the existence of the will to do so.

When the British Labour Party adopted a nuclear disarmament programme, Moscow promised to cut its arsenal to match the number of nuclear warheads eliminated by London. Furthermore, the Soviet Union has declared that it would have no nuclear missiles targeted on Britain if foreign nuclear weapons were removed from the British Isles. It may of course be argued that this would not save Britain from the "nuclear winter" which would set in if a global nuclear conflict flared up. True enough. The only safeguard against that is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, but partial steps leading in that direction are also important. So, the way for Europe to insure itself against catastrophe is to renounce nuclear weapons and not to improve them.

But perhaps Britain and France need nuclear forces for political rather than military reasons, as an attribute of modern diplomacy, a status symbol?

Such illusions might have been understood in the 1960s, at the dawn of the nuclear-missile era. But not today.

Every state is entitled to have adequate means to ensure its own security. But to aggravate the danger of global catastrophe for parochial considerations of prestige is dangerous egoism. This policy, moreover, has no justification in the history and political practice of Britain or France.

It will be recalled that de Gaulle's foreign policy earned France wide international authority at a time when its "strike force" was still in embryo. Paris is unlikely to find nuclear weapons useful in Chad or the Middle East (to secure the release of hostages, for example) or, say, in New Caledonia. Its tests on the Mururoa Atoll and the brutal measures the French secret services have taken against the environmentalist opponents of the tests have encountered deep resentment rather than approval.

Britain's example is equally instructive. The British nuclear navy did not deter Argentina from entering into armed conflict with London over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). Fortunately, British nuclear-armed ships made no immediate contribution to the "glorious" victory of Her Majesty's armed forces. Yet even their presence in the zone of hostilities (reported by the British press) could have had the most dramatic consequences.

No Return to Bows and Arrows

In general, given the present level of nuclear armaments and the world balance of forces, it is impossible to imagine an effective political role for nuclear weapons in the service of British and French diplomacy.

This is the line of thinking that has been adopted by influential political forces in Britain. The Labour Party believes that NATO should scrap its outdated nuclear strategy. They have declared with good reason that when President Reagan agreed in Reykjavik to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, his position was closer to that of the British Labour Party than the Conservatives (much to the latter's alarm). The Liberal-Social Democratic alliance is steering a middle course: its leaders think the fate of the British nuclear weapons should be decided through negotiation, but they oppose the increase of the British nuclear potential.

In France, divisions on the issue of the national nuclear deterrent are not so clear-cut. This can be traced to the postwar period when many Frenchmen felt the atomic bomb would help France regain its great-power status. Can it be said that the worship of a nuclear force (even an independent one) has remained the same in the modern interdependent world, which is in danger of nuclear death?

Hardly. There are already signs of a changing mood in various strata of French society. Of late not only the Communists but the peace movement and some retired high-ranking officers have been coming out in support of an end to nuclear tests, which would mean freezing nuclear arsenals at their present level. Socialists, too, seem to be leaning towards modifying the military doctrine. The debate on the role of the French nuclear forces is apparently beginning at various political levels.

One would like to hope that the understanding will gain ground on both sides of the Channel that Britain and France, both members of the Security Council, have sufficient political, economic, diplomatic and military (non-nuclear) resources at their disposal not only to uphold their own interests in the international arena, but to play a constructive role in the settlement of conflicts and the defusing of tensions.

What is to be done with the British and French nuclear forces?

The only sensible course is to work to reduce and eliminate them. London and Paris (as well as Bonn) should not see this as an encroachment on their sovereignty, their independent role in world affairs or their West European identity.

They might have grounds for feeling so if the Soviet Union were at the same time insisting on keeping its own nuclear arsenal undiminished, if it were seeking a nuclear-missile monopoly in Europe. But this is not the case.

Moscow is not demanding the immediate reduction or elimination of British and French nuclear forces. It is the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. that are to lead the way. As proposed in the Soviet statement of January 15, Britain and France would only have to join the process at the second stage, i.e., in 5 or 8 years' time. And all nuclear weapons should be eliminated before the end of the century.

British, French and other West European leaders should not try to alarm the public in their countries with the prospect of a return to the age of seven-, thirty- and even hundred-year wars. There is no danger of a return to bows and arrows. The power of modern non-nuclear weapons is so great that they are well able to act as deterrents. If, that is, Western leaders insist that international stability can only be based on deterrence, and not on a system of confidence. It would be far better of course if they get rid of this syndrome.

Be that as it may, Europe's chance of survival does not reside in a "European nuclear bomb" or Anglo-French nuclear forces used on behalf of the West European countries. Salvation lies elsewhere. True safeguards of national security today can only be offered within the framework of universal and general security equal for all. This is a job for politicians and not for the military.

Britain and France, like their non-nuclear allies in Western Europe, can make a considerable contribution to this process. As a minimum, they should desist from erecting additional barriers along its way.

■

Currency Gamble

Foreign exchanges were, perhaps, the Old World's hottest places this unusually cold January. Temperatures began to rise on New Year's eve owing to the depreciation of the French franc. Following the franc, currency speculators hastily began to sell Italian lire, Danish kroner, Belgian francs and Irish pounds. Towards the end of the second week of 1987, the rush assumed such proportions that Common Market finance ministers had to realign currency rates within the European Monetary System (EMS). In order to bring down the financial temperature, the ministers decided to adjust the Deutschmark and Dutch gulden against the French franc, which resulted in corresponding realignments of other EMS currencies.

This adjustment of Common Market currency rates—the fourth over the past eighteen months—detracted little from the excitement at West European foreign exchanges, however. As Washington, a most experienced "currency gambler," entered the game, currency exchange rates were reshuffled in other financial centres of the capitalist world as well. Washington did not obey the rules of the game and breached the agreements it had recently imposed on other Western countries.

In September 1985, when the economic situation in the U.S. began to deteriorate (largely due to the toughening of foreign competition), an urgent meeting of finance ministers of the Group of Five (the U.S., Japan, the F.R.G., Britain and France) was convened at the New York Plaza Hotel. The Ministers agreed on an "orderly" depreciation of the U.S. dollar which would enable the U.S. to make its commodities more competitive and in due course improve its foreign trade balance. After all, the lower the quotation of a country's currency against that of its trade partners, the cheaper its exports, and the more goods it sells. Washington wanted the depreciation of the dollar to be "orderly" lest its competitors interfere with it in an attempt to avoid raising the prices of their exports.

The competitors did not interfere. The dollar fell by just 20 per cent against the Deutschmark and the Japanese yen during 1986. The corresponding rise of the yen had an especially adverse effect on the Japanese economy: it led to a sharp production slump in export industries. Since the further soaring of the yen threatened still greater losses, Tokyo signed (on October 31) the Washington-proposed bilateral agreement on the stabilization of both currencies' exchange rates. However, the agreement was effectively annulled by the U.S. in January when it started to "talk the dollar down," as financiers call the spread of the rumours about an "expected" depreciation of its exchange rate. For currency speculators such rumours are the signal to sell U.S. dollars and buy up Deutschmarks, yens, pounds sterling—even "weak" francs and lire. In a word, Washington began to "run from the dollars" in order to make its exports more competitive on the "beggar thy neighbour" principle—just as it had in the early seventies.

The results of the currency policy pursued by the U.S. at that time are common knowledge. It led to the disruption of the postwar Bretton Woods hard currency rate system, galloping inflation, sharp fluctuations of world market prices and overall financial instability. By the late seventies the dollar was so weak that promises to make it strong again were among Ronald Reagan's election campaign trump cards.

What can a relapse into past practices by the Reagan Administration yield now? Economists on both sides of the Atlantic and in Japan are racking their brains for the answer. They are inclined to think Washington's "currency gamble" fraught with no small risk both to the U.S. economy and the dollar-dominated capitalist currency system as a whole.

In the "strong dollar" period (1980-84), the American financial system became so addicted to regular injections of foreign capital that the outflow of capital to other countries will be extremely painful. To begin with, it is going to cause a lack of liquidity on the U.S. money market and a concomitant rise in bank credit rates. This, in turn, will lead to a recession in the economy, whose condition is giving cause for concern, as it is. Foreigners are known to have purchased a sizable proportion of U.S. Treasury bonds, thus helping to offset the federal budget deficit and foot the Pentagon's bills.

The Washington-provoked rise of other currencies will inevitably tell on the economic situation in Western Europe, as well as in Japan. For this reason American exports will have a hard time finding their way to foreign markets, even at reduced prices.

Meanwhile, time is pressing, all the more so as Washington has to put not only its trade, but also its payments balance in order. Once a creditor, America has now turned into one of the world's heaviest debtors. On the one hand, the fall in the dollar exchange rate somewhat reduces this debt but, on the other, it compels America's creditors to withdraw their capital from dollar-denominated funds as soon as possible. Rapid transfers of "hot money" from currency to currency will rock the West's international monetary boat, as was the case in the seventies.

The sweltering January at the Old World's foreign exchanges has shown that the rocking has already begun. The West German currency continues to rise, although the U.S. dollar already costs less in terms of Deutschmarks than it did six years ago. For all we know, the day is not so far off when the attitude to U.S. money in Europe is that illustrated in the 1973 cartoon below.

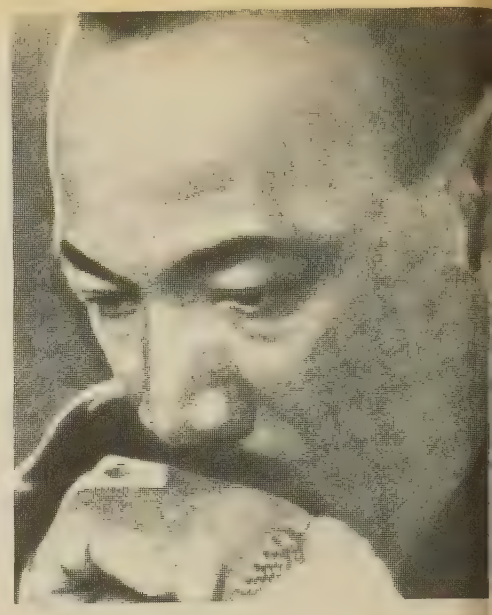
Felix GORYUNOV

"It looks as if the dollar has fallen again." Cartoon from Tageszeitung (F.R.G.)

Still Being Murdered

Martin Luther King Day

MELOR STURUA



Martin Luther King the man was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was murdered on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee. Martin Luther King the symbol is born and murdered in the United States of America virtually every day. He is born in the flames of the struggle for equality by black Americans. He is murdered by the fire directed against his brothers by the society of violence and racism. Such is the paradox of his life and cause—the apostle of non-violence falls and rises in the flames, in the clash of passions.

A Question for the President

Martin Luther King Day was celebrated as a national holiday for the first time last year. In a message to mark the day, President Reagan pathetically exclaimed that King had forged his dream from the values of his religion and the ideals of the Founding Fathers, that he had dreamt of a world in which human dignity would be respected, human rights protected and all be equal before the law. In his striving for the full implementation of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, Reagan added, Martin Luther King resembled Lincoln and urged Americans to pledge again to turn his dream into reality.

Fine words, are they not? But who pronounced them? A politician who opposed the civil rights bill in 1964, the year King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. A politician whose administration with Attorney General Edwin Meese at the forefront is now trying in every way to undermine and dismantle the very structure of this legislation. A politician who brought opponents of desegregation into the civil rights commission and supported the exemption from taxation of colleges that discriminate against blacks. A politician who consistently, year after year, reduces allocations for social programmes. Last but not least, a politician who fought to the bitter end against proclaiming the anniversary of the great preacher from Atlanta a federal holiday.

For sixteen years the relevant bill aimlessly roamed the juridical labyrinths of Congress. Trying to justify his reluctance to sign it and make it law, Reagan said he could not allow himself the luxury of giving government employees another day off. Jesse Helms, a Senator from North Carolina and leader of the extreme right, came to the President's rescue. He resurrected allegations about King's "communist sympathies" and called for the release of an investigation started by Hoover. Asked about his attitude to these charges and the demands made by Helms, Reagan replied sarcastically, "We'll know in about 35 years, won't we?" (An intimation of the date when the file is to be declassified.) A scandal erupted and the President had to apologize to King's widow, Coretta. When he finally got down to signing the bill he said condescendingly that he was giving in to the wishes of the public.

I recall a press conference at the White House a long time ago. A black woman journalist asked Reagan: "Mr President, in the 1960s you opposed all legislation on civil rights but now you are saying that you are a participant in the revolution proclaimed by Martin Luther King. If this is so, why is your Administration trying so hard to abolish flexible employment quotas for black Americans, other minorities and women?"

The "great communicator" replied without batting an eyelid that his government wanted a society indifferent to the colour of the skin of any of its members, which, he believed, was also demanded by Martin Luther King.

Then came another question: "Do you think you would be president now if you had been born black or a woman?"

The "great communicator" failed to give an answer.

The Murderer Is Free

It is held that the murderer of Martin Luther King is James Earl Ray, inmate No. 65477 at Tennessee State Prison. The "lone killer" version holds no water and has never been proved in court with the participation of a jury and the parties involved. Besides, can all the crimes of racism be imputed to a "lone killer"?

James Earl Ray is locked in a windowless cell in Block Unit 6 on Death Row. He seemed reliably locked in. He was in his cell on that terrible day in May 1985 when an act of undisguised genocide was perpetrated in Philadelphia. How indeed could inmate No. 65477 have murdered the eleven blacks living in building No. 6221 on Osage Avenue in the city where the Declaration of Independence, mentioned in passing by Reagan in connection with the anniversary of King's birth, was proclaimed? Could inmate No. 65477, all by himself, have surrounded building No. 6221 and, moreover, bombed it from a helicopter hovering overhead? There were women and children among the dead.

And was not inmate No. 65477 reliably locked up on the terrible night in December 1986 when Michael Griffith, a black youth, was murdered in a picturesque suburb of New York? Griffith and his friends—"dirty niggers"—were beaten just for daring to

appear in a white locality. Three managed to escape while Griffith died under the wheels of a car. Michael Griffith, like Martin Luther King, was not killed by inmate No. 65477. He was killed, to quote Mark Twain, by the "United Lynching States."

Last year, on the anniversary of Martin Luther King's birth, President Reagan visited an elementary school in a black neighbourhood of Washington named after the great fighter for the equality of non-whites. The President even maintains a correspondence with one of the pupils at this school—eight-year-old Rudy Heinz. Reagan praised King and his cause, and said that he was vigorously implementing the laws on human rights and that the United States would not be free until every single American was free. In the end Reagan said that if he were asked about the position of blacks in America he would reply that they had never had it better.

One is expected to tell children fairy tales. But since I am not writing for children, permit me to substitute statistics for fairy tales. I will begin with data from the national health statistics centre: the number of suicides among blacks increased more than threefold in the period from 1960 to 1985. But suicides in statistics mean murder in politics. Despairing people take their own lives? No, the answer is not so simple. It is society that puts intolerable pressure on them.

A poll among blacks conducted by CBS television jointly with the New York Times shows that most blacks think the situation in the country is worse than it was five years ago.

William Wilson is sociology department chairman at the University of Chicago and leading authority on the black poor. He found that in the 1960s for every 100 black women aged between 20 and 24 there were 70 black men with jobs. By 1980 this figure had dropped to 50 men per 100 women, and even to 35 in the group aged 18 and 19.

Inmate No. 65477, confined in a solitary cell in Block Unit 6 on Death Row in Tennessee State Prison, does not compile the country's budget. He is busy writing petitions and appeals. Others compile the budget. Commenting on the draft federal budget of the United States for the fiscal year 1987, columnist Anthony Lewis wrote: "What is happening in the federal government now? Attorney General Meese is fighting to destroy the modest, long-existing effort to bring excluded blacks into the economic mainstream. The message is: We don't care.

"President Reagan's budget makes his message clear. Even the programmes that demonstrably work to uplift the poor, to make them healthier and give them hope, must be sacrificed so we can build more weapons." The draft budget for fiscal 1988 exacerbates this tendency.

Love and Hatred

In its report on the position of black America in 1986, the National Urban League, a black organization, states that if the Administration wants to be a Rambo-like destroyer of civil rights, it should not pretend that its efforts are beneficial to the black population. It is Rambo-like racists who are killing King and his dream. And statistics are no longer cartridges for a Remington rifle but shells for the 15-inch guns of the battleship New Jersey. The report says that although blacks comprise 12 per cent of the population of the United States, they account for 22 per cent of those who have swelled the ranks of the poor since 1980. The most tragic aspect is the increased poverty among black children.

It has been stated by the leader of the National Urban League, John E. Jacob, that the Reagan Administration has the worst civil rights record as compared with any other Administration over the past fifty years. He said that this Administration's effort to associate itself with the name of Martin Luther King could not be termed otherwise than obscene. Some more statistics. According to a public opinion poll conducted by the ABC television and Washington Post, most blacks consider the President a racist.

Exactly a year ago, in the presence of a huge congregation of "Washington society," a bronze bust of Martin Luther King was unveiled at a ceremony in the Great Rotunda of the Capitol. It is the first and so far the only monument to a black in the building that houses the highest legislative body of the United States, virtually crammed with busts, statues and paintings of the country's historic figures. One has the impression that in these surroundings King is not only lonely but an inmate of a prison with a very impressive-sounding name.

"Dr King was not assassinated for dreaming, but for acting and challenging the government," said his friend and disciple Jesse Jackson. How right he is.

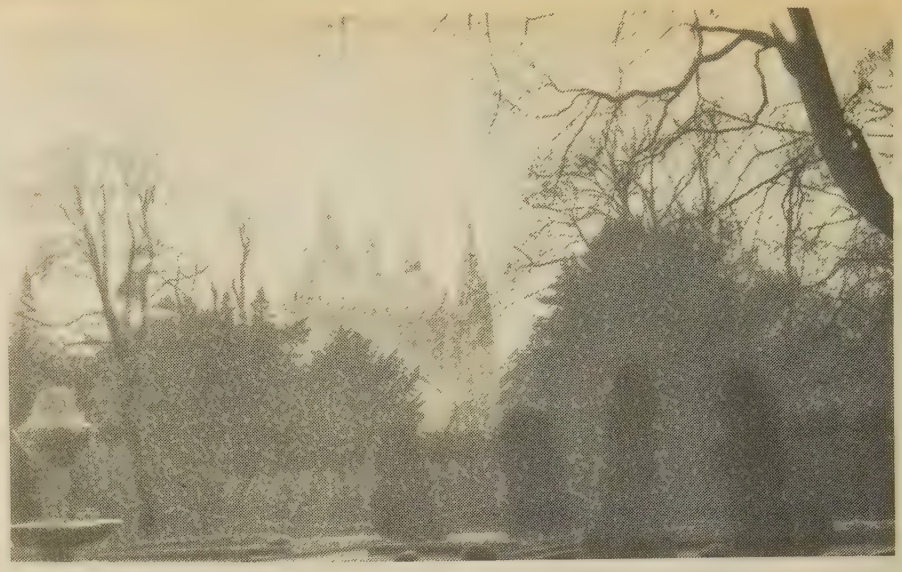
President Reagan muttered an apology to Coretta King for his clumsy joke about the file the FBI kept on her husband. But the authorities did not hesitate to incarcerate Coretta and her children—Martin Luther King's son and daughter—for taking part in a protest demonstration in front of the South African embassy in Washington.

Vice-President Bush declared the day of King's birth a day of "national reconciliation," as if there can be any reconciliation between freedom and slavery. But while for some the name of Martin Luther King is a tranquillizer, for others it is a banner of struggle. That is why another holder of the Nobel Peace Prize, Bishop Desmond Tutu from South Africa, took part in last year's celebrations in Atlanta. In Ebenezer Baptist Church, where King and his father used to preach, Coretta presented the Martin Luther King Prize to Desmond Tutu. Unlike Bush, who spoke of "reconciliation," Desmond Tutu spoke of implacability. Unlike Bush, who said that love is stronger than hatred, Tutu said that love of freedom is stronger than hatred for those who oppress freedom. Both made vows invoking King's name.

King's dreams are still dreams. The Main Street of America is still closed to blacks. The street on which the black population of the United States lives is rather like Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, the street where King was born, a street of slum houses and outcasts.

The remains of Martin Luther King, Jr. lie under white marble on Auburn Avenue beyond Ebenezer Baptist Church. His most famous words are inscribed on the marble slab: "Free at last, free at last." No, King's people are not yet free in America, far from free. They are fighting for freedom. And King is with his people. Even death has not relieved him of this great duty. ■

The Stones of Prague



● Old architecture and new problems ● Need for fine craftsmen ● Continuity

From our special correspondent
ALBERT PIN

The door of the house called "Under the Bell" was locked and Dr Josef Mayer, excusing himself, went to fetch the key. While he was away, I had time to examine the façade of the old building, the fenced-off building site in front of it, the monument to Jan Hus nearby and the majestic Tyn Cathedral behind....

We were standing in the famous Old Town Square, which has always been the heart of Prague. The Town Hall clock chimed midday, as it has done countless times over the five centuries or so since it was built.

Josef Mayer, head of department at the Prague Centre for the State Protection of Monuments and the Environment, returned with the key and unlocked the door.

My readers will excuse me if I digress. We will certainly return to the house "Under the Bell," one of the most remarkable buildings in Prague. But now let us have a look at a unique exhibit in the city museum, a model of the historic centre of the capital, made more than 150 years ago. Artist Antonin Langweil painstakingly reproduced in the space of 19 sq. m. not only streets and squares, buildings and monuments, pavements and sidewalks but also such details as lampposts, sewage hatches, fences, outbuildings, stacks of firewood in courtyards, trees, shrubbery and paths in gardens and orchards. Langweil did his best even to convey the colour of façades and type of roofing and reproduced, house numbers and coats of arms....

All this makes the model invaluable to today's historians and art historians, architects and restoration workers. The centuries, especially our own, have altered the appearance of the old city considerably. It went through a period of rebuilding late last century and has expanded outwards in the past few decades. But the historic heart of Prague, with its magnificent architectural monuments, has been preserved, albeit incompletely. Comparing Langweil's model and today's Prague, a purist, of course, will sigh: alas, there have been many losses, all the more regrettable as not only merciless time but also human folly, ignorance and greed are to blame. Yet the people of Prague, deeply in love with their city, have good grounds for optimism: responsibility for the preservation of the monuments of the past—and therefore for the present and future of the country—has now been assumed by the state. Of course, this requires much effort and an ability to resolve problems and rectify mistakes. But all this is a sign of the maturity of socialist society.

Architectural Preserve

No. 8, Hradcany Square, is known to many people in Prague. It features in the list of sights of interest in the city as a Renaissance monument of the late 16th-early 17th centuries formerly known as the Martinicky Palace. Just over ten years ago the former layout was reconstructed, and the interiors and the courtyard with its well and staircase restored to their original state. The house was turned over to architects and it was there that Prague's chief architect, Blahomir Borovicka, received me in his office.

As I made my way to the former Martinicky Palace, I had some idea of the serious problems my host might want to discuss. I have always had an interest in famous monuments and cities with rich historical heritages. I have always heard a great deal about the profound respect of the people of Prague for the legacy of the past. A society for the preservation of old Prague, whose members include workers in culture and the arts as well as members of the general public, has been in existence since 1900. Patriots came together to protect national monuments from the greedy capitalists. At the time developers had started ruthlessly tearing down ancient buildings, some of them unique, to put up property to let. Many were preserved thanks to the efforts of the society.

"We can talk endlessly about Old Prague and its monuments and patriots," Blahomir Borovicka said with a smile. "But first I will mention a comparatively recent event: in 1971, the government passed a decree declaring the entire historic centre of the city—about 900 hectares—a museum-precinct. In this area there are 13 national architectural complexes, such as Prazsky Hrad and Vysehrad, and more than 1,400 architectural monuments, among them palaces, monasteries, cathedrals, churches and dwellings."

The museum-precinct is at the same time the centre of the capital, and this combination seems to be an intrinsic paradox. So I asked the chief architect about the attitude of people living in Old and New towns, Vysehrad, Mala Strana (Lesser Town) and Hrad: do they not prefer newly developed areas to Old Prague?

"We have difficulties and problems, of course. The historic centre of Prague accounts for a mere 1.6 per cent of the present area of the capital. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries 170,000 people lived in the centre, while the figure today is a mere 60,000, or 5 per cent of the population of Prague. But some 220,000 people come to work in the historic centre of the capital. This

represents roughly a third of Prague's jobs. People come here from all over the city. There is therefore a pressing need to ease the strain on the centre by transferring some offices to other districts, and we have plans to do so in the immediate future. Meanwhile, we have to reckon with another bleak forecast: by the year 2000, even fewer people than today will live in the precinct. It is as yet impossible to reverse this trend, but we are in a position to put a brake on it.

"The historical centre still has the special sympathies and love of the people of Prague, although old buildings and districts offer far fewer comforts than newly developed ones. These inconveniences are often no burden for old folks, or indeed for young people if they do not yet have children. But when children arrive, young families usually try to move to other districts."

I recalled at the time that secretary of the Prague city committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Karel Beranek had discussed these problems at a plenary meeting of the party's Central Committee late last year. He cited the following figures: more than 1,100 of the 3,000-odd buildings in the historical centre of the capital are cultural monuments. More than 800 buildings date from the 13th-18th centuries and more than 600 from the last century. Almost half the flats in those houses lack some basic modern conveniences. Till recently, only the façades and roofs of these buildings were repaired while their interiors were never modernized. There are dilapidated derelict houses in the very heart of the city.

"The conclusion suggests itself," Borovicka continued. "To prevent Old Prague from losing its population, to keep it the true centre of the capital, bustling with life, along with the restoration of historical monuments we should come to grips more energetically with the rebuilding and modernization of houses to be used for tenancy.

"In the postwar years Prague continued to expand, with new housing development projects growing up on the outskirts of the city. That was one way of solving the housing problem, and repairing and modernizing old buildings was put off indefinitely. But now the limit has almost been reached in new development because there are virtually no vacant sites. We have to look for building sites within the boundaries of the old city. But even more importantly, we have to set about comprehensively rebuilding it. The task is far from easy. Our builders are used to working from scratch. Yet this production-line method is of no use in Old Prague, and today's cumbersome building equipment cannot be brought in either. Some other technique is needed. As a result, many builders, such as assemblymen, will have to be retrained. Yet the need for the skills of such people as masons, plasterers and roofers will grow: it will be necessary to modernize or rebuild houses put up both in earlier times and in our century. We will have to replace ceilings and entirely change the layouts of flats during reconstruction. The volume of work to be done is immense: it also includes the modernization of the service lines—an arduous job in any conditions, especially in old districts with their narrow streets and houses crowded together. That is why it is impossible, for instance, to connect them to the central heating system: no supply lines can be built here. Gas and electricity will be used on a wider scale to replace coal. The need for 'clean' fuel is immense: 680 old coal boiler rooms in the historical part of the city are an especially serious problem because air circulation is poor in the depression in which Prague is situated, hemmed in as it is with hills."

The chief architect (Blahomir Borovicka has held this post for the past 16 years) noted another aspect of the current stage of reconstruction: during the 1970s, restoration work was done on individual complexes and key historical monuments, such as the Karlov Bridge and Prazsky Hrad. Now restoration workers approach the problem differently and concentrate on the comprehensive reconstruction of an old district or street. This approach is far more efficient, as is evidenced by Celetna Street in the Old Town.

The Royal Road

Celetna Street is one of the oldest and, unquestionably, most fascinating streets in Prague. All visitors to the city know it is a must: it is part of the so-called Royal Road, Prague's main thoroughfare in former times.

The history of the road is associated with the name of King Vaclav IV, the son of the Emperor Karl. Before his time, the kings had lived in Hrad, high above the Vltava. In the late 14th century, Vaclav built another residence on the boundary between the Old and New towns. Under Vaclav and his successors, the Prague castle was merely a venue for official receptions and formal ceremonies, and the King and his court used to go there from the new royal residence.

Celetna Street today is a virtual museum of Prague's architecture. True, the Gothic style is only to be found there in the basements of old buildings—but the Baroque is represented by several masterpieces. Czech Cubism in architecture is represented by the house, "At Our Black Lady," built in 1911-12 on the corner of the Fruit Market. However, you will not get a clear picture of the succession of styles as you walk along Celetna Street today: every now and then you have to make detours and squeeze past walls, shopwindows and the doors of quaint pubs as almost the entire street is under scaffolding.

More than 50 old buildings on Celetna Street are being restored (many of them have already been completed) and the interiors modernized wherever necessary. By the end of this year the street will have new service lines, a new pavement and lighting system. In short, by February 1988, the 40th anniversary of the victory over reaction, Celetna Street will be as good as new, along with the historical Old Town Square, where restoration work is currently in full swing as well.

The theatre named in memory of the Czech playwright Josef Tyl, an old building in Rytirska Street, is being modernized. It made world music history: in October 1787, Mozart's "Don Giovanni," composed in Prague, had its first performance there. Architectural monuments on the streets behind the Tyn Cathedral are being renovated. Builders and restoration workers are also at work at the other end of the Royal Road, on Neruda Street, where more than 90 houses are being modernized.

Restoration work is under way in Prazsky Hrad as well as in the ancient palaces of Mala Strana. The list could be continued indefinitely.

During the current five-year period,

Prague today: Tyn Cathedral and other buildings on Old Town Square are under scaffolding.

Photos by author

Josef Mayer told me, all in all 3.5 billion crowns have been set aside for restoration work in the country, and Prague will get roughly half this sum. It seems good money, but the needs are great as well. Here is another problem of recent origin: Prague does not have enough master builders and craftsmen. (Incidentally, this problem was mentioned by the chief architect as well.) Recently Prague made extensive use of the services of specialists from South and North Czechia and other regions. They contributed substantially to the renovation of well-known architectural monuments. But now many of those masters have returned home, where their skills are also badly needed. Monuments of the past, of which Czechoslovakia has more than 30,000, are now being restored everywhere.

People for Themselves

The inscription on the façade of the national theatre, recently restored, reads: "People for themselves." The people of Prague have given this marvellous building on the bank of the Vltava the poetic name of the "Golden Church." It was built with money contributed by the people themselves and blocks for the foundations were brought from all over the country. The theatre, formally inaugurated in November 1883, came to symbolize the awakening of national self-awareness.

"People for themselves." These words, I think, convey the essence of today's concern on the part of socialist society for historic and cultural monuments. Many people are contributing to this noble undertaking, among them builders, restoration workers, historians, architects, sculptors, artists, volunteers from different walks of life, schoolchildren, students and housewives. It is a job for some, for others their life's work, a civic duty and the call of their hearts for many more

I have already mentioned the Society for the Preservation of Old Prague. It has a membership of 2,000 today, among them architects, civil engineers and art historians. They are giving considerable practical assistance to the restoration workers, doing so free of charge in their spare time.

The government and municipal authorities listen to the expert opinion of the society. Here are just two examples. When the problem of building an underground in Prague was discussed, the society gave its support to the idea, rejecting the other option for the solution of the transport problem—high-speed surface tram lines. If the green light had been given for the trams, many old buildings would have had to be torn down.

Josef Mayer, who told me about the society and the enthusiasm of its members, is himself a champion of noble causes. Doctor of philosophy, economist, art historian and archeologist, he is head of a key department in the Prague Centre for the State Protection of Monuments and the Environment and deputy chairman of the Society for the Preservation of Old Prague. His first speciality, economics, and his knowledge in that field have proved useful in his present occupation. Moreover, he has even had to learn about cybernetics: for those who work to preserve architectural monuments, computers are a necessity rather than a bow to fashion. To do a really good job, one must first know everything about monuments. Exhaustive information about their history and present condition has to be obtained and stored in data banks. So computers are a great help to restoration enthusiasts.

Virtually all the historic buildings now have detailed certificates documenting their condition, thanks to the efforts of the staff of the monument protection department headed by Dr Mayer. The Prague Centre looks after monuments many centuries old, among them palaces, churches and houses, used by many occupants, from the Ministry of Culture to ordinary tenants. Alas, far from all the occupants or tenants honour their obligations to care for the work of their ancestors. Till recently, possibilities of influencing the indifferent and the careless were limited to criticism and remonstrations. Josef Mayer told me with satisfaction, however, that legislation has been drafted on administrative penalties for damage to architectural monuments, including fines of up to a million crowns.

Priorities have to be assigned to restoration and reconstruction projects due to the limited resources of building organizations and the shortage of specialists. These priorities are kept to and the progress of work monitored by the staff of Dr Mayer's department. It is just as important to decide how to use the restored historic building with minimum interior modernization, especially when the monument is very old.

The Blazena Anezka Monastery, once ranking among the city's most beautiful architectural complexes, has been undergoing restoration over many years. In the last century, the early Gothic monument, one of the oldest in the country (begun in the 13th century), was on the verge of ruin. A society for its restoration was founded in 1892. But it was only under people's government that the monument was given a new lease of life. Today it houses a permanent exhibition of 19th-century Czech paintings from the collection of the National Gallery.

A cultural centre with a tiny cinema hall, a lecture hall and a discotheque in the cellar of a former palace, once used as a warehouse.... The attractive display windows of antique stalls and bookshops instead of office windows.... An art club or a hotel in a once derelict house.... A pedestrian precinct in the very centre, offering relief from the din of motor traffic.... The people of Prague are of course heartened by such changes, although, perhaps, not everyone notices in the bustle of day-to-day life how Old Prague is changing its aspect and how its old stones seem to be sloughing off the grime of the centuries and regaining their original beauty.

But let us return to Old Town Square, the house "Under the Bell." Let us follow Josef Mayer under its roof and listen to his story of the palace, built for the mother of King Karl IV in the 14th century, half ruined and enlarged in the last. Let us meet the restoration workers, who first came to the house 15 years ago, and congratulate them all—sculptors and carpenters, plasterers and art historians—on the imminent completion of their endeavours.

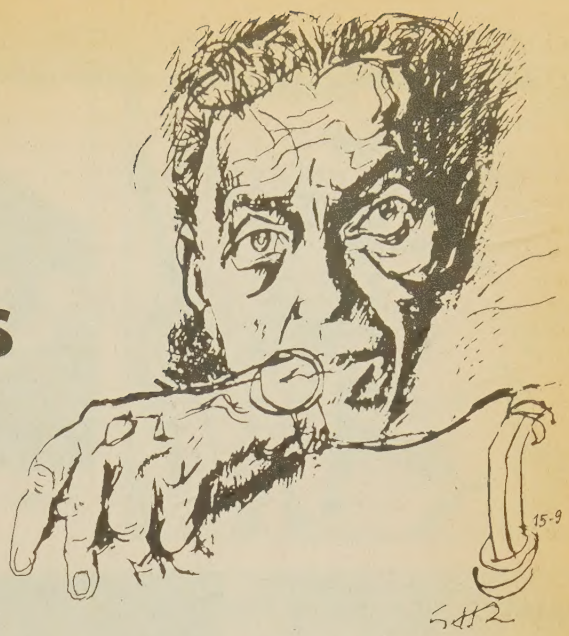
It was obvious from Dr Mayer's enthusiasm as, in spite of his years, he tirelessly took me from one floor to the next and one hall to the next, that the house "Under the Bell" was very special to him. I learned afterwards that Dr Mayer was working on a substantial monograph, an account of the many years of studies that have made it possible to reconstruct the history of the house and carry out its restoration to the minutest detail.

I do not think many people even in Prague know about the fascinating discoveries made by restoration workers. I was amazed by one of the secrets of the house: when restoration work had just started, a bricked-in passage into the neighbouring Tyn Cathedral was discovered. There had once been a tiny balcony in the wall of the cathedral and the passage had led to it from the upper floor of the house. Dr Mayer gave me an electric torch and, having negotiated a narrow corridor, I went out onto the balcony, hanging over the empty, cavernous cathedral....

Shortly the Prague gallery, the new occupant of the house "Under the Bell," is to mount an exhibition. Some of the halls, such as two private chapels with unique fragments of Gothic art, will undoubtedly evoke much interest in themselves. One of the halls will be used for concerts. Three experimental concerts have already been organized (and the acoustic properties have proven superb) for the restoration workers, who have given new life to the masterpieces of former times.

Prague—Moscow

The Sunshine and Bread of His Canvasses



A saddening piece of news from Italy. Her sunny painter, RENATO GUTTUSO, one of the foremost artists of the century and a true friend of the Soviet people, has died at the age of seventy-five.

Renato Guttuso was born and raised in the long-suffering land of Sicily, a land ravaged by social conflict, poverty and the ever present mafia. To his dying day he carried in his generous soul and expressed in his vibrant paintings a sincere love for his native island, its courageous people, fishermen and vine-growers, steeped in poverty, exploited, and rebellious.

Italy has lost an artist who continued the great traditions of the land that was the cradle of the Renaissance, that gave the world many giants whose art, to this day, serves as a yardstick for human achievement in the realm of the spirit.

The world and humanity have lost a bard who has always, even in the grimmest and gloomiest periods in history, celebrated Man, the beauty of his body and spirit, his striving for Freedom and Light, and the brotherhood of people.

The life and work of every genuine artist, an artist "by the grace of God," is always a source of delight to contemporaries and a lesson to posterity, to younger brothers and like-minded colleagues.

The heart of such an artist is imbued with Love, a love so great that it spills out in a life-giving fountain of beauty and warmth. So it was with Guttuso. It is this great feeling that illumines his characters: peasant men and women, labourers, miners and herders. Here they walk, with their pitchforks and hoes raised high, their red banner unfurled, stern and grimly determined to fight the hoodlums hired by the landowners, to uphold their right to the patch of land they have wrested from the sun-scorched desert. Here they are hacking at hard rock, filling heavy baskets with poisonous sulphuric ore. Here they stand, their fists clenched, facing the brutal enemy, red blood dripping on the stones.

It was characteristic of Guttuso that he took the opportunity to indicate the social background of his characters in the titles of his paintings: "The Miner," "The Stonemason," "Girl Singing the Internationale," "Worker Reading a Newspaper," "Fishermen in Calabria."

In stating his views and leanings so definitely, he challenged the bourgeois world and the injustice reigning in it.

It was no accident that during the last war when fascist Italy fought on Hitler's side, Guttuso painted a canvass of passionate protest entitled "Crucifixion" which used the Gospel story to convey a poignantly political message. The canvass is an indictment of hangmen and torturers.

"Girl Singing the Internationale."

Self-portrait.

It was at that time that Renato Guttuso joined the Communist Party. Hidden among the easels and colourful palettes in his studio was a printing press belonging to the Communist Party organization in Rome on which anti-fascist leaflets were printed.

It is no wonder that in postwar Italy Guttuso was at the head of the democratic young artists who sought their own paths in art, opposing the invasion of fashions from across the Atlantic. Guttuso's answer to these extreme, formalistic, trendy experiments which reject man, his soul and spirit, was to produce not short-lived poster-like pictures, but full-blooded, realistic, contemporary canvasses depicting life in all its diversity.

This approach proved to be far more profound and enduring in its impact than the numerous propagandist paintings that appeared in those years.

Guttuso claims much of the credit for the fact that in a world marked by confrontation between genuine artists and commerce, between art and capital, which is hostile to all creativity, progressive artists have addressed themselves to the aspirations of the masses and the destinies of millions.

Guttuso is no more, but his art is with us, and it continues to struggle.

Trite words, perhaps. But there is a lofty truth in them, like that in the sunshine and bread of his canvasses.

Grigory OGANOV

Igor Belanov: Europe's Footballer of the Year

Hardly anyone could have predicted just a year ago that Kiev Dynamo striker Igor Belanov would win one of the most coveted prizes in European and world football, the Golden Ball of Europe's footballer of the year. The prize is awarded by the weekly France-Football, which polls leading European football commentators.

Igor Belanov, 26, who became the focus of attention in international sport after the world championship in Mexico, was placed far ahead of Gary Lineker of Britain in the poll. Another forward from Kiev, Alexander Zavarov, also was named among the top ten European footballers in 1986.

Belanov was included, along with goalkeeper Rinat Dasayev, in the symbolic 1986 world team picked by the Italian Gazzetta dello Sport.

Belanov became the third Soviet footballer to win the Golden Ball: the legendary Lev Yashin, goalie for Moscow Dynamo and the Soviet national side, won the prize in 1963 and Kiev Dynamo striker Oleg Blokhin, in 1975.

There are many parallels between the sporting careers of Belanov and Blokhin. Both reached their peak under Valery Lobanovsky, today one of the world's best coaches. Both are very fast, capable of putting on a burst of speed in no time. Lightning spurts by Oleg and Igor have often brought success to their team.

But no striker can shine on his own, without support and understanding from his teammates. Oleg Blokhin relied on the skills of Vladimir Muntyan, who could make a precision pass from dozens of metres away to just the point to which the striker was speeding. Belanov today is backed up by several teammates, and Alexander Zavarov is especially good at outwitting opposing players and helping Belanov find his way to the goal. Moreover, Zavarov is a remarkable dribbler and has a series of chip shots up his sleeve, and Kiev Dynamo and the national side profited greatly from his skills last season.

TASS photo

All this is not to say that Belanov is merely a good finisher. Igor himself creates fine combinations, leads his teammates, or draws two or even three defenders, making room for attack. He is also the team's penalty kick specialist.

Belanov began playing football in Odessa, where the game had started to develop before the revolution. The sport is well understood and loved in the city. Although last season Odessa Chernomorets did not make the first league, we should remember that the team always had fine players, who stood out even on the national side (such as half-back Leonid Buryak, who also transferred from Chernomorets to Kiev Dynamo in his day).

Igor's talent was not recognized immediately. As a boy, he was turned away from a children's football group: too short and not fast enough. . . . It was a blow for a boy, but Igor had character. He went on playing in backyards, became the captain of boys' teams and took part in the Leather Ball competitions for Soviet children.

After a few years he was spotted by Chernomorets coaches and invited to join the team. Three years later he caught Lobanovsky's eye.

At first, Igor was lost in Kiev Dynamo. The team, too, were going through a crisis, though gradually restoring their fighting spirit and developing a modern mode of play. Lobanovsky correctly defined Belanov's role on the side and believed that the young player would be able to cope with strenuous workouts and temporary setbacks. Igor lived up to the coach's expectations, and today he is a key player both for his Kiev Dynamo and on the national side.

Europe's footballer of the year is modest and even shy. He avoids the press but, when journalists do manage to corner him, would rather talk about his teammates. When the best Soviet athletes of 1986 were honoured in a national TV programme in early January, he talked mainly about Zavarov, named the Soviet footballer of the year in a poll by the weekly Football-Hockey (Belanov is second in that list).

Belanov still has room for improvement. In particular, he should learn to convert his chances better.

This year there are new trials ahead for Igor Belanov and his teammates: a game with Bucharest Steaua, winners of the European Champions' Cup, for the Supercup in February, a new round of games for the European Champions' Cup and, on the national side, the elimination games of the 1988 European championship.

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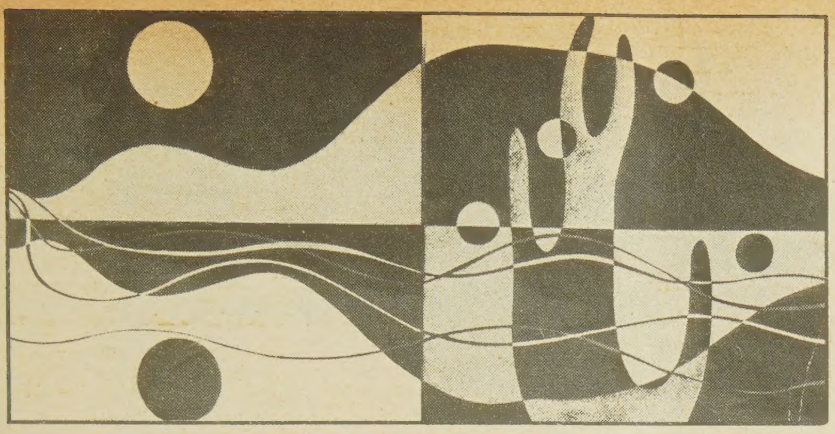


Liu Nanping. "Mother Nature."

Chinese Lacquer

The history of Chinese lacquer work, deservedly famed for its eye-caressing beauty, goes back more than a thousand years before our era. The lac is derived from the viscous toxic resin of the qishu tree, but before being transformed into a work of art—a vase, a casket, a cup, a screen or piece of furniture—it has to go through a long and laborious process of grounding, drying and polishing. Chinese lacquer art flourished particularly in the Ming period between the 14th and 17th centuries when superb masterpieces of carving, miniature painting and inlay work were created.

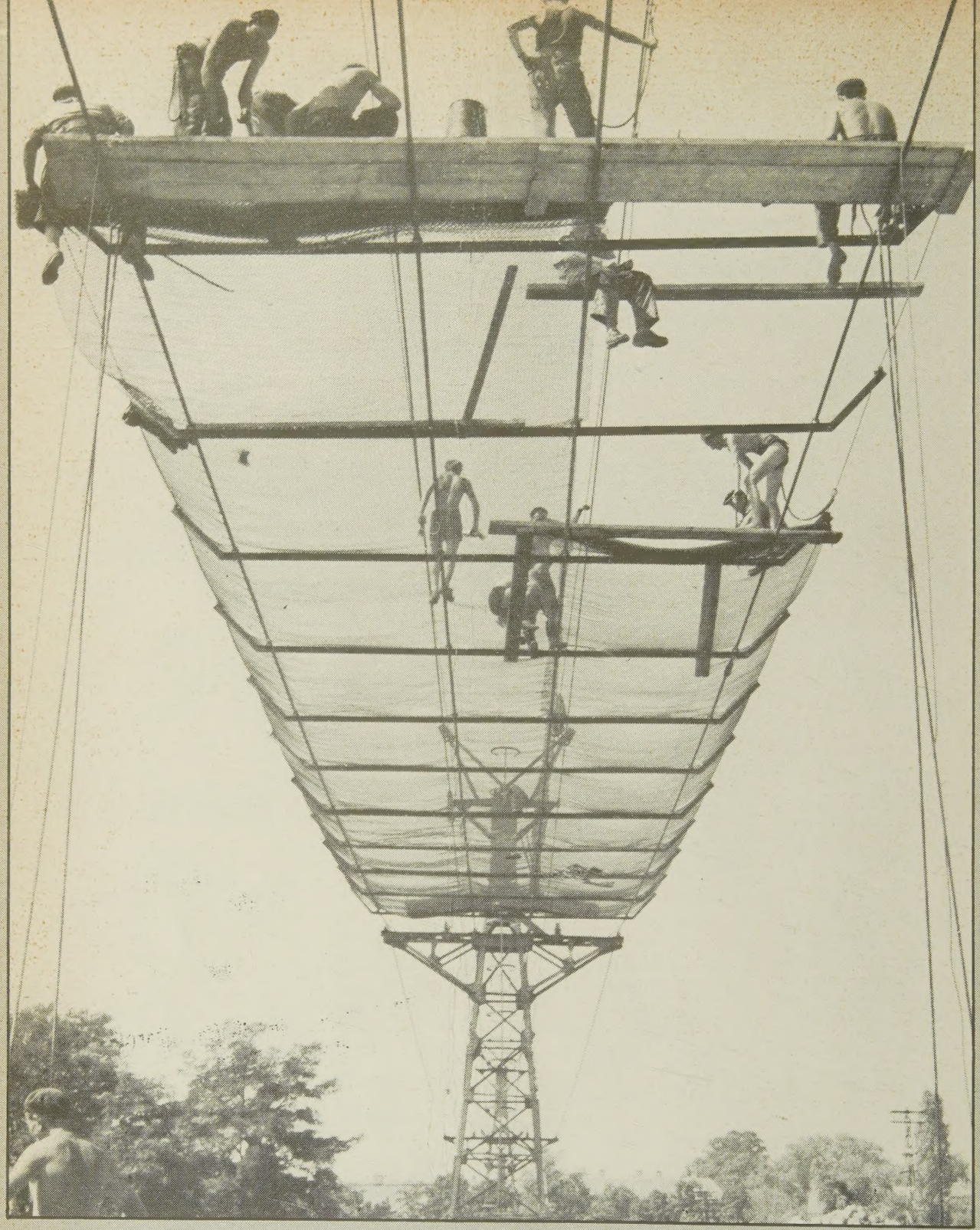
In the middle of the present century Chinese lacquer work underwent something of a second birth, this time in the form of easel painting. About 100 specimens of modern Chinese lacquer painting done in recent years were displayed at an exhibition arranged recently in the State Museum of Oriental Arts in Moscow. In them traditional techniques are combined with new means of expression and style. Modern chemistry has widened the palette and supplemented natural lacs with synthetic resins which almost match the quality of the natural. Wood and aluminium, egg-shell and gilt, mother-of-pearl and ferriferous salts—there is perhaps no material that cannot harmonize with the ancient gift of the qishu tree.

Photos by V. Panov

Zhang Jie. "Flute."

Zheng Xiuqian. "Town on the River Minjiang."

Wang Zhensuo. "Mountain Village."



Assemblymen.

Lajos Tabak (Hungary)

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